

STRATEGIC FIVE-YEAR STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PLAN
FOR
TITLE I
OF THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT OF 1998
AND
THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT

State of Nebraska

For The Period of
July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2011

Full Plan

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Plan Development Process

Include (a) a discussion of the involvement of the Governor and the State Board in the development of the plan, and (b) a description of the manner in which the State Board collaborated with economic development, education, the business community and other interested parties in the development of the state plan.

[\$112(b)(1).]

a) The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) originally met on March 16, 2005, to develop the state's vision, goals, and priorities. All of the Local Area Boards participated in the vision building. Governor Heineman reviewed and approved the articulated vision and priorities. In March, 2006, the NWIB utilized the Pacific Institute to facilitate a Strategic Planning Process to review and update the vision, goals, and priorities. As a result of this planning session, four Key Result Areas (KRAs) were developed to give priority and focus on the NWIB future direction. In March of 2007, in recognition of the new reality facing the people of Nebraska, the Governor revised his vision to emphasize the need to prepare Nebraska to compete in the 21st Century. Throughout the planning process, State Board members were involved in the development of the plan based on committee assignments (i.e. compliance committee, workforce and economic development committee, or executive committee). On May 17, 2005, the state plan and comments were reviewed by the NWIB standing committee on Compliance. The full board met on May 24 to discuss the plan. A vote on the plan was then taken, and the plan was submitted to the Governor for his review and comment. On April 10, 2007, the NWIB met and recommended to the Governor the modification for the period of July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2009. At the March 14, 2008 meeting, the NWIB reviewed and recommended modification needs for PY 2008. On March 13, 2009, the NWIB reviewed the PY09 modification and recommended approval to the Governor. The NWIB on June 17, 2009, reviewed the final modification including the Recovery Act Plan stand alone attachment.

b) The following Workforce Investment partners attended and participated in the March 16th vision building: Greater Lincoln WIB; Greater Omaha WIB; Greater Nebraska WIB; Nebraska (NE) Department of Economic Development; NE Community Colleges; NE Department of Education-Adult Education; Veteran Affairs; Public Schools; YWCA; Juvenile Services; Omaha Sheetmetal Workers; Chamber of Commerce; Job Corps; University of Nebraska; Post Secondary Education; Central NE Community Services; City of Lincoln, and NE Department of Labor. A majority of the Board representatives were from the business sector. The Vision, Goals, and Priority section was sent specifically to all State board members and all parties attending the March 16th NWIB meeting and vision building session.

Include a description of the process used to make the Plan available to the public and the outcome of the State's review of the resulting public comments.
[\$§111(g), 112(b)(9)].

The Plan was posted at www.NebraskaWorkforce.com on April 27, 2005, for the public to access. The modifications for PY07, PY08, and PY09 were posted on the same site. The latest modification is posted at the new www.dol.nebraska.gov site. A summary of comments received and how they were considered in the plan development process is included in the Attachment section.

Message from Governor Dave Heineman

Welcome to the State of Nebraska's Strategic Workforce Investment Plan. This course of action gives Nebraska a framework for reaching our workforce development vision.

I believe our vision for the years ahead must be about preparing Nebraska to compete in the 21st Century, in an age of technological marvels, new educational challenges, international competition and entrepreneurial opportunity. That is the new reality facing the people of this state.

The following plan moves us toward that vision.

Rural economic development is one of my top priorities as Governor. Therefore, this plan was developed with our smaller communities in mind. Developing high-paying jobs and having skilled workers to fill those jobs is critical to the long-term economic interests of our rural communities. Education and job training are absolutely essential to our economic development pursuits.

Another top priority for our state is to meet the changing long and short-term needs of businesses and individuals with a coordinated, efficient and less bureaucratic delivery system. To accomplish this, we will bring together the key players in workforce development including business and industry, economic development, education and the public workforce system on a regular basis to continuously identify the workforce challenges of the state and to develop innovative strategies and solutions.

The following plan gives a more specific outline of our state priorities. It also includes our state governance structure, an economic and labor market analysis, overarching state strategies, major state policies and requirements, administration and oversight of the local workforce investment system and service delivery information.

I look forward to the many successes this strategic workforce development plan will bring. I want to thank you for taking the time to review our efforts.

I. State Vision

Describe the Governor's vision for a statewide workforce investment system. Provide a summary articulating the Governor's vision for utilizing the resources of the public workforce system in support of the State's economic development that address the issues and questions below. States are encouraged to attach more detailed documents to expand upon any aspect of the summary response if available. (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)

Nebraska's Vision

Our vision for the years ahead must be about preparing Nebraska to compete in the 21st Century, in an age of technological marvels, new educational challenges, international competition and entrepreneurial opportunity.

The Governor's Vision is expressed in four goals:

1. **Maintain** a dynamic, demand-driven workforce development system focusing on high-growth, high-demand industries within a regional development context;
2. **Increase** the integration of services to employers and job seekers by multiple public and private partners;
3. Recognize the need to meet the changing long and short-term needs of businesses and individuals with a coordinated, efficient, and less bureaucratic delivery system; and
4. Provide the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning, and living.

In March of 2006 the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) held a planning session facilitated by the Pacific Institute that resulted in establishing four Key Result Areas (KRAs) committees for 2006-2008. The four KRA committees have established the following goals: #1. Increase partnerships and opportunities to meet the twenty-first century needs of our workforce customers (employers and labor force); #2. Enhance external and internal relationships of the NWIB to address workforce issues; #3. Define and energize NWIB roles and responsibilities; and #4. Develop diverse income streams to support a dynamic demand-driven Workforce Development System. Each KRA has established Action Steps for their goal. (The KRA goals were updated in 2008.) All NWIB members serve on one or more of the KRA committees. To varying degrees, each KRA supports one or more of the Governor's following goals:

Goal 1: **Maintain a dynamic, demand-driven workforce development system focusing on high-growth, high-demand industries within a regional development context;**

To enhance and achieve forward progress in Goal 1, the NWIB and State Agency leadership have guided and support the following:

- FutureForce Nebraska, which is a three-year old initiative dedicated to improving the quality of life in Nebraska by educating our present and future workforce about: Careers (including high-growth opportunities available

regionally, statewide, and nationally); the Pathways to those careers; and how to take advantage of our unique resources and economic opportunities. Currently, FutureForce Nebraska has a pathway project underway in these high-growth demand occupations: biotechnology, construction, entrepreneurship, health sciences, industrial manufacturing, and engineering, and transportation distributing, warehousing and logistics. For more information, visit Website at <http://www.FutureForceNebraska.org>.

- The NWIB, along with the Department of Education, Nebraska Workforce Development, and Economic Development held a *FutureForce Forum – Vision for Nebraskans* on December 13, 2006. This day-long event involved stakeholders in the future of the economic and educational health of Nebraska. Employers, workforce professionals, community and economic leadership, and educators from all across the state participated. This was the start of the discussion for how Nebraska will address the economic, workforce, and education challenges it faces now and in the future. The results of this Forum start to set the stage for Nebraska to implement concepts envisioned by initiatives like WIRED. (See Forum Synthesis Attachment.)

Additionally, the State of Nebraska **Economic Development** has established the following priorities as key elements in addressing the State's economic health:

1. Retention, training, and retraining of the existing labor force.
2. Recruitment of new workers to state with needed skills.
3. Development of Regionalized Industry Clusters suitable for expansion and development across the state, ie, processed food, transportation and logistics, and information services.
4. Support efforts such as FutureForce Nebraska and standardized curriculum at the community college level to prepare tomorrow's workforce.

[Note: Deloitte & Touche Fantus, Target Industry Study, December 1, 2000; Target Industry Update, December 30, 2003, and The Wadley-Donovan Group, Labor Market Assessment Central Nebraska, March 25, 2004.]

The retention, training, and retraining of the existing labor force shall be realized through the continued use of WIA statewide funding for grants distributed through the Nebraska Worker Training Program. This has been possible because of the limited WIA authority to serve incumbent workers.

Goal 2: Increase the integration of services to employers and job seekers by multiple public and private partners;

In 2004, a special committee of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board completed an Inventory of Workforce Development Training Programs in the State in order to maximize and leverage the broad array of Federal and State resources available for workforce investment flowing through the State's agencies. This study found that Nebraska receives approximately \$34.4 million in federal funds, nearly \$510 thousand in grants and other revenue, and provides nearly \$12 million in state revenue, totaling approximately \$47 million each year for workforce development. As a result of these findings, the NWIB commissioned a study from the University of Nebraska, Bureau of Business Research, to survey and evaluate how well partner services through the One-Stop

Career Centers are delivered. This study was completed in June 2006. (See Attachment.) The NWIB has reviewed and shared the findings of this study with each of the three local WIB Chairs. Each was asked to provide comments and/or request technical assistance from the State on the findings. The State has received, from each local area, their responses, and in 2007 the local WIBs and their staff will be implementing activities to address continuous improvement in providing services through the One-Stop System.

Nebraska's Workforce System continues to successfully expand its partnership with employers, which benefit the job seeker. To date for PY 2006, 3696 employers have accounts with the Workforce System receiving staff-assisted services. Additionally, the Workforce System offers employers a menu of cost reimbursable services to assist with their human resources (H.R.) needs. Nebraska is proud of its employer partnerships and projects. Many employers exclusively post their positions with the Career Centers across the state, as well as hold job fairs and recruitment events particular to their industry. In Nebraska, the private placement firms, Advance Staffing Inc. and Manpower, are collocated at several Career Centers. In January 2007, we kicked off our most recent employer partnership with Union Pacific Railroad. Union Pacific Railroad is a large Fortune 500 national employer with its headquarters in Omaha. It has the world's largest train yard in North Platte, Nebraska. The One-Stop Career Center in North Platte entered a contract with Union Pacific to host a "storefront" which will recruit, assess, and hire all new employees for the company's train service positions.

Goal 3: Recognize the need to meet the changing long and short-term needs of businesses and individuals with a coordinated, efficient, and less bureaucratic delivery system;

The Governor envisions bringing together the key players in workforce development including business and industry, economic development, education, and the public workforce system on a regular basis to continuously identify the workforce challenges facing the State and to develop innovative strategies and solutions. Each year he hosts the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development. A part of this Summit is a forum in which the Governor meets with key business, economic development, workforce development, and education officials to strategize priorities. Priorities from the 2005 Governor's Summit can be found in Attachment. This year's Governor's Summit will be held April 10 and 11. This year's theme is *Nebraska Workforce Development; Playing the Global Game*. Most recently (February 14, 2007), the Governor held a special session with business leaders and government stakeholders to identify actions in addressing Nebraska's skill labor shortage, particularly in rural areas of the state.

Goal 4: Provide the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning, and living.

The Governor's vision recognizes that an important group needing education and workforce training are youth, including youth most in need, such as out of school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farmworker youth, Native American and Indian youth, youth with disabilities, and other youth at risk. FutureForce Nebraska educates the future workforce with standardized curriculum for a pipeline of youth in demand occupations. Awareness by employers and the public of the resources available through the workforce system shall be enhanced through marketing and branding efforts.

II. State Workforce Investment Priorities

Identify the Governor's key workforce investment priorities for the State's workforce system and how each will lead to actualizing the Governor's vision for workforce and economic development. (§§111(d)(2) and 112 (a).)

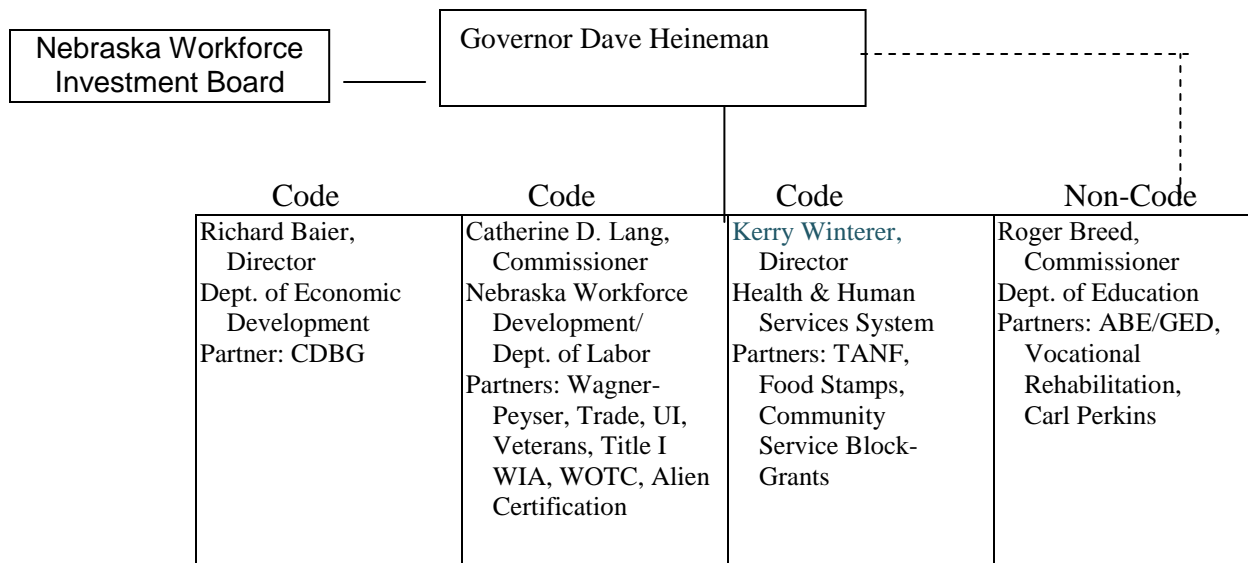
These priorities were established after the State and Local Workforce Investment Boards met on March 16, 2005, and discussed workforce development challenges and frustrations. In 2007, the priorities were updated to address the U.S. Department of Labor ETA's national strategic direction.

1. **An integrated, seamless service delivery system where all of the mandated partners are actively participating in the Workforce Investment System through co-location, single point of service, and a shared vision.** [Leads to actualizing Goal 2 and Goal 3 of the Vision.]
2. **A demand-driven workforce system focused on meeting the talent needs of high-growth, high demand industries within a regional development context where individuals are trained with an awareness of the skill sets necessary for specified State, regional, and local targeted industries.** [Leads to actualizing Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, and Goal 4 of the Vision.]
3. **Customers making informed choices regarding work and training based on quality workforce information including job pay, benefits, and local economic issues.** [Leads to actualizing Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, and Goal 4 of the Vision.]
4. **Increased State and Local flexibility in tailoring the delivery of One Stop services, taking into consideration:**
 - local diversity and language barriers;
 - individuals with disabilities;
 - demographic shifts;
 - transportation barriers;
 - out-of-school youth populations;
 - priority of service for veterans [ensure linkage to State and county veterans' organizations];
 - faith-based organizations;
 - rural development needs;
 - incumbent workers;
 - entrepreneurs;
 - nontraditional training and jobs placements; and
 - the pursuit of waiver authority, as necessary, to enhance service delivery.[Leads to actualizing Goal 2, Goal 3 and Goal 4 of Vision.]
5. **Increased performance accountability through the evolvement of integrated and enhanced information systems, particularly common data and performance systems.** [Leads to actualizing Goal 3 of the Vision.]

III. State Governance Structure (§112(b)(8)(A).)

A. Organization of State Agencies in Relation to the Governor:

1. Provide an organizational chart that delineates the relationship to the Governor of the agencies involved in the public workforce investment system, including education and economic development and the required and optional One-Stop partner programs managed by each agency.



Mandated & Optional Partners with no
Relationship to the Governor:
Job Corps
Title V Older Worker Program
Seasonal/Migrant Farmworkers (NAF)

2. In a narrative describe how the agencies involved in the public workforce investment system interrelate on workforce and economic development issues and the respective lines of authority.

In Nebraska, the true collaboration between economic development and workforce professionals takes place at the local level. In nearly all communities across the state, Workforce Development professionals are a part of the economic development team that engages in recruiting new businesses or expanding existing businesses. The role the Workforce Development professional plays in economic development efforts includes providing labor market information (i.e. available workforce, commuter information, wage and benefit information, etc.), offering Career Center services (i.e. labor exchange, interview/conference room space, partner resources, etc.), serving on Industrial Development or Chamber of Commerce Boards, participating in a “site visit” by a potential employer,

as well as, coordinating access to the wide array of workforce development services and products.

At the State level, Nebraska Workforce Development/Department of Labor is currently engaged in the following economic development activities: “Bring Nebraskans Home” initiative (out-of-state job fairs), 2007 Governor’s Summit on Workforce Development (spring of 2007), and FutureForce, a project that will standardize curriculums across the state for high-demand jobs.

The line of authority for economic development efforts at the local level is with city, county or industrial development officials. Often times, economic development efforts are spearheaded by a public utility, such as, the Nebraska Public Power District. In Greater Nebraska and in Greater Omaha, local workforce staff are State employees, likewise, so are Nebraska Economic Development field representatives. There is no single line of authority in accomplishing economic development, but rather economic development efforts are a coordinated partnership of State and local workforce and economic development stakeholders.

B. State Workforce Investment Board (§112(b)(1).)

1. Describe the organization and structure of the State Board. (§111).

On May 27, 1999, through Executive Order 99-02, Governor Mike Johanns designated the Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC) to serve as an "alternative entity" during the transition phase until the permanent Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB), as provided in the Workforce Investment Act, was established. The HRIC, created by Executive Order 97-5, qualified since it was (a) in existence before December 31, 1997, and (b) was established pursuant to Title VII of the Job Training Partnership Act and (c) included representatives from business and labor organizations. The HRIC was created pursuant to, and in accordance with, the provisions of Section 702 of the JTPA. Governor E. Benjamin Nelson established the HRIC by Executive Order 97-5, which was signed on October 17, 1997. In August of 1999, the HRIC approved the Governor’s proposal to grant temporary designation requests from each of the three Nebraska Service Delivery Areas as local Workforce Investment areas after conducting public forums on the subject.

Recognizing the need to create a new board that conformed to statutory requirements as work under the Act progressed, in December of 1999 Governor Johanns established the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board. Created by Executive Order 99-04, the NWIB was required to maintain a business majority. The remainder of the board included top policymakers from: labor; government agencies responsible for programs and activities described in §121(b); chief elected officials from each Workforce

Investment area; community-based organizations; and organizations with experience in youth activities. The Governor supplemented selections in these mandated categories with individuals possessing expertise in the following fields: educationally disadvantaged students, veterans, post-secondary education, older workers, Native Americans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, the Job Corps; and services for the visually impaired. The chair and vice chair of the NWIB were selected by the Governor from the business and industry members on the board. In March of 2001 the legislature passed and the Governor approved LB 193 to adopt the Nebraska Workforce Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. §§48-1616 to 48-1627). In 2008, Neb. Rev. Stat. §48-1623 was amended by the passage of LB 210 changing the membership of the NWIB. The Nebraska Workforce Investment Act provides the statutory authority to carry out such duties and functions authorized under the state and federal acts.

2. **Identify the organizations or entities represented on the State Board. If you are using an alternative entity which does not contain all the members required under section 111(b)(1), describe how each of the entities required under this section will be involved in planning and implementing the State's workforce investment system as envisioned in WIA. How is the alternative entity achieving the State's WIA goals? (§§111(a-c), 111(e), and 112(b)(1).)**

The Governor of the State of Nebraska

[The Lieutenant Governor of the State of Nebraska](#)

Nebraska Legislature

Mayor of Seward

Nebraska State AFL-CIO

Steamfitters and Plumbers Local Union

Metro Community College

West Nebraska Juvenile and Adult Services

University of Nebraska

Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired

Nebraska Community College Association

Experience Works

Indian Center Inc.

The Nebraska Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and Economic Development

Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

NAF Multicultural Human Development Corporation (Represents migrant and seasonal farm workers)

Job Corps

An employer majority representing businesses from urban, suburban, and rural areas of Nebraska reflect workforce opportunities within the state.

Members of the board chose - or were assigned to - various committees created by the board. The NWIB met (March 16, 2005) with Local Areas,

partners and the public to set vision, goals and priorities for the state plan. After the plan was available (April 27, 2005), the Compliance Committee incorporated viable public comments and suggestions into the final draft. Meeting as a whole, the state board then voted its approval of the state plan on May 24, 2005, and submitted it to the Governor. The Compliance Committee is responsible for carrying out the functions of the board as described in §111(d) of the Act. This committee met on February 13, 2007, to recommend modifications to the Plan. On April 10, 2007, in a public meeting, the NWIB made final recommendations on the PY07 and PY08 Plan Modification.

Nebraska utilizes a unicameral and as a result, two members of the legislature are represented on the board to provide input on implementing the state's Workforce Investment system.

Through a signed memorandum, the Commissioner of Labor, the Director of Health and Human Services, the Director of Economic Development, and the Commissioner of Education agreed that they or their designees should represent all but two of the programs, services, and activities described in §121(b) of the Act. It was agreed that, for purposes of representation on the state board, those programs authorized under §121(b)(1)(B)(i) and §121(b)(1)(B)(ix) would not be represented by a state agency official. All programs represented by these four agency heads understand the arrangement.

3. Describe the process your State used to identify your State board members. How did you select board members, including business representatives, who have optimum policy-making authority and who represent diverse regions of the State as required under WIA? (20CFR 661.200).

In September of 1999, informational letters were sent out to all HRIC members, interested parties, and groups or individuals that might qualify as members of the state board under §111(b) of the Act. These letters were supplemented with public information meetings in October of 1999 in all regions of the state (seven cities were used – Omaha, Lincoln, Beatrice, Norfolk, Grand Island, North Platte, and Scottsbluff). Application forms were then mailed out to over 150 Chambers of Commerce, and business- and trade-organizations throughout the state requesting nominations for the board from the business and industry category. The six major labor organizations in the state were also mailed requests for nominations. From this pool of eligible applicants, the Governor selected members with optimum policymaking authority representing Nebraska's diverse population. The populations of each Workforce Investment area were translated into percentages, and those percentages were used as a guide to insure that all regions of the state would be represented proportionately. As members have retired the Governor has replaced them in accordance

with the Act. Business members on the board come from communities as diverse as Springview, a town of 326 in North Central Nebraska, to Omaha, the largest city in the state with a population of 404,267. Members are appointed by the Governor to serve on the NWIB, with the exception of two representatives of the state legislature. In accordance with the Act, the presiding officer of the unicameral is empowered to select the members of the legislature to serve on the board.

Nebraska is well equipped to develop its vision. Led by a business majority reflecting the varied business opportunities within the state, the board has immediate access to the information required to make the workforce responsive to the changing needs of business. Board membership has an appropriate distribution of members from metro and non-metro areas of the state. It has the diverse expertise necessary to insure the inclusion of all segments of the population in this evolution. In addition, the board has the policymakers needed to achieve those changes in a timely, meaningful manner.

4. Describe how the board's membership enables you to achieve your vision described above. (§§111(a-c) and 112(b)(1).)

In accordance with the Act, two members representing business and industry on each local Workforce Investment Board also sit on the state board. Their presence provides a direct business link from the local level to the state level. Each of the nineteen partners seated on the local boards' report to one of the four state agency heads seated on the state board, providing coordination within the §121(b) programs. Further interaction is provided through the exchange of the minutes of each meeting between the state and local boards and regular updates by the local Workforce Investment areas at each state board meeting. As the local boards develop and implement their plans to meet the challenges and opportunities unique to their areas, the state board will monitor them to insure they are in compliance with laws, regulations, and policies. Once those assurances are met, the state board is prepared to use its position to aid the local boards in the full implementation of their local plans. In accordance with the spirit of the Act, both the state and local boards will be partners – leading or following as the circumstances dictate – in developing Nebraska's Workforce Development system.

5. Describe how the Board carries out its functions as required in §111(d) and 20 CFR 661.205. Include functions the Board has assumed that are in addition to those required. Identify any functions required in §111(d) the Board does not perform and explain why.

Nebraska created the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) in accordance with the Act. Each member of the NWIB serves via Executive Appointment by the Governor. With the authority of the Governor, the input and leadership of business, and the expertise and cooperation of labor, community colleges, special populations, and state agencies, the board will provide strong leadership for the statewide system. The entire board also has a role in the development of the state plan [§111(d)(1)]. The chair and vice-chair of the board were selected by the Governor from the business and industry representatives and serve at the

pleasure of the Governor. In order to utilize the expertise and time of its members efficiently, the NWIB employs a committee structure to fulfill its functions. There are two Standing Committees of the Board. The Executive Committee, with each member appointed by the Governor and chaired by the NWIB Chair, has the power to act for the entire board between regular meetings of the NWIB. The Executive Committee consists of fifteen NWIB members. Eight (the majority) will come from business and industry (the chair, the vice-chair, chairs of each of the committees, and five at large selections made by the Governor). The remainder of this committee will have one member representing youth, one representing labor, one representing community-based organizations (all selected by the Governor), and the four state agency heads representing the §121(b) programs. As a result, the Executive Committee mirrors the state board in its composition. By implementing the committee system and giving the Executive Committee power to act for the board between regular meetings, it will streamline the process for timely action and NWIB approval. Meetings of the Executive Committee are public meetings. The Standing Committee on Compliance has the authority to investigate and make recommendations on any issues relating to §111(d) and §129 of the Act. The committee chair is a Business representative, and members of the Compliance Committee are selected by the NWIB. The NWIB currently has four additional committees focusing on the board's strategic plan goals: increase partnerships and opportunities to meet the twenty-first century needs of our workforce customers (employers and labor force); enhance external and internal relationships of the NWIB to address workforce issues; define and energize NWIB roles and responsibilities; and develop diverse income streams to support a dynamic, demand-driven Workforce Development System. Chairs of these committees update the board at Executive and full board meetings. In addition, the NWIB has established various Ad Hoc committees to address specific issues and make recommendations to the board. Recent examples include a Messaging and Marketing Committee to advise the NWIB on use of Federal Incentive Funding, and a committee to review and make recommendations on the state's Incentive Policy. Representatives of business and industry, serve on and chair these committees.

6. How will the State board ensure that the public (including people with disabilities) has access to board meetings and information regarding State board activities, including membership and meeting minutes? (20 CFR 661.205)

The board is a public body as defined by Nebraska law. Therefore, it is subject to both the Public Records Law and the Public Meeting Law requirements. Reasonable notice of all meetings is required. The State Board publishes notice of its meetings ten days to two weeks in advance in the two largest newspapers in Nebraska: the *Omaha World-Herald*, a statewide daily paper with the largest circulation in Nebraska; and the *Lincoln Journal Star*, the second largest paper in the state. Notice is also placed on the Public Meeting Calendar on the State of Nebraska's website at <http://www.nebraska.gov/calendar/activity.cgi>. The public has a right and is encouraged to attend. The public notice indicates that auxiliary aids or reasonable accommodations will be made to insure accessibility to people with disabilities. All individuals have a right to speak (subject to reasonable rules regarding conduct); and minutes of all meetings shall be available to the public within ten working days. The state board also has its own area on the Internet within the Department of Labor website. This allows the public to view information on upcoming meetings, membership, and minutes from the most

recent meeting. It also affords the public the opportunity to comment on any pertinent issues.

- 7. Identify the circumstances which constitute a conflict of interest for any State or local workforce investment board member or the entity that s/he represents, and any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or his or her immediate family. (§§111(f), 112(b)(13), and 117(g).)**

Every state or local Workforce Investment Board member, regardless of his or her occupation, is considered a public official. Consequently, they are subject to certain sections of the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act. Those circumstances that would constitute a conflict of interest for all members of the state and local boards would include hiring of immediate family members, soliciting or accepting something of value, use of a public position for personal gain, use of public resources, and interests in contracts. The applicable sections of state law that deal with those issues – and how to proceed in such circumstances – were presented to the members of the state board and each member of the local boards.

- 8. What resources does the State provide the board to carry out its functions, i.e. staff, funding, etc.?**

The State, through the Nebraska Department of Labor, provides staff support and legal counsel. WIA Title I State administration funds also support the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board in carrying out its functions including travel costs, costs associated with appropriate conferences, etc.

C. Structure/Process for State Agencies and State Board to Collaborate and Communicate With Each Other and With the Local Workforce Investment System (§112(b)(8)(A).)

- 1. Describe the steps the State will take to improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in section 112(b)(8)(A), at both the State and local level (e.g., joint activities, memoranda of understanding, planned mergers, coordinated policies, etc.). How will the State board and agencies eliminate any existing State-level barriers to coordination? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)**

As Nebraska looks to, and plans for, the future direction of Workforce Investment activities and the labor market demands, the Executive Committee of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board will serve as the catalyst to improve operational collaboration and eliminate barriers to coordination. The Executive Committee conducted an outside audit/evaluation to determine collaboration and coordination amongst State agencies and other organizations representing One Stop partners. This evaluation conducted by the University of Nebraska identified successes Nebraska has experienced and outlined barriers or areas of improvement for enhanced collaboration and communication. This evaluation was a take off of the inventory of Workforce Development Training Programs conducted by the NWIB in 2004, which discovered that Nebraska receives approximately \$47 million in Federal and State resources for workforce development. An additional purpose of this

evaluation was to determine the effectiveness of the utilization of these funds. The evaluation was completed in June 2006 and in the fall of 2006 the NWIB shared the findings with each of the local WIB Chairs. The local areas are currently in the process of identifying and implementing Action Steps to address the findings. The State has offered technical assistance to help as requested.

- 2. Describe the lines of communication established by the Governor to ensure open and effective sharing of information among the State agencies responsible for implementing the vision for the workforce system and between the State agencies and the State workforce investment board.**

Nebraska's Governor, Dave Heineman, has established the following lines of communication. The Commissioner of Labor, Director of Economic Development, and the Director of Health and Human Services are all direct reports to the Governor. The Governor holds regular cabinet meetings with his direct reports, which provides the opportunity to discuss and give direction to Nebraska's Workforce Development System. The Governor also utilizes his Policy Research Office to assist in coordinating federal and state resources, establish policy, and initiate vision for Nebraska.

The Chair of the State Workforce Investment Board has direct access and discussions with the Governor, and via the different Committees of the State Workforce Investment Board, the Governor is kept advised through briefing summaries of the Board issues and direction. This is done on an ongoing, as-needed basis.

Additionally, the Commissioner's of Labor and Education, along with the Director's of Health and Human Services and Economic Development all serve on the State Workforce Investment Board, where they provide input, direction, and influence in Nebraska's Workforce Development System. As the Governor continues his term in office, communication lines will be reviewed and enhanced as needed.

3. Describe the lines of communication and mechanisms established by the Governor to ensure timely and effective sharing of information between the State agencies/State Board and local workforce investment areas and local Boards. Include types of regularly issued guidance and how Federal guidance is disseminated to local Boards and One-Stop Career Centers. (§112(b)(1).)

Information is shared in a timely manner between local Boards and the State Department of Labor through multiple ways: 1) Local WIA Administrator Meetings are held monthly to cover any State or Local issues that need to be discussed; 2) State policies and issuances are posted on the Internet site at www.dol.nebraska.gov [Go into Workforce Investment Act – Issuances or Policies]; and 3) State policy review process. When Federal guidance is issued, revisions to State policies are made accordingly. After the revisions are drafted, they are reviewed by the Agency Legal Counsel and when approved, they are sent to staff of the three Local WIBs for a 10-day review. If there are no recommended changes, the policy is posted on the Internet site where it is open for public comment. If after 30 days of posting, there are no comments then the policy is official.

- 4. Describe any cross-cutting organizations or bodies at the State level designed to guide and inform an integrated vision for serving youth in the State within the context of workforce investment, social services, juvenile justice, and education. Describe the membership of such bodies and the functions and responsibilities in establishing priorities and services for youth? How is the State promoting a collaborative cross-agency approach for both policy development and service delivery at the local level for youth? (§112(b)(18)(A).)**

The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board includes members with youth expertise. However, there is no State Youth Council as part of this Board. Instead, task groups are formed to address particular youth issues, as needed. For instance, several partners including representatives of the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, 4-H Youth Development, Nebraska Department of Education, and State and local Workforce Development representatives met at a retreat to set the foundation for developing curriculum on Work Readiness Skills competencies. The curriculum developed was called “Pathways to Success: Nebraska Work Readiness Curriculum.” In regard to promoting a cross agency approach at the local level for youth, the state has issued a "Youth Councils" policy and it requires that a subgroup within each local board be established as the youth council. The responsibilities of the Youth Council are identified within the policy. Youth councils assist the local boards in developing and recommending local youth employment and training policy and practice. These councils, also, assist the local boards in establishing linkages with other organizations serving youth in the local area. The membership on the council must have a representative of Job Corps if a Job Corps Center is located in the local area represented by the council.

IV. Economic and Labor Market Analysis (§112(b)(4).)

As a foundation for this strategic plan and to inform the strategic investments and strategies that flow from this plan, provide a detailed analysis of the State's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context. Elements of the analysis should include the following:

A. What is the current makeup of the State's economic base by industry?

Nebraska's Labor Force

Labor force estimates provide insight on current, historical, and future trends in the state. The labor force is the total of all civilians classified as employed or unemployed, excluding those who are under 16 years of age, inmates of institutions, or members of the Armed Forces. In 2005, Nebraska's average annual labor force was 986,296. Since 2000, Nebraska's labor force has increased at an average rate of 0.7 percent each year for a five-year gain of 3.6 percent. Figure 1 below shows Nebraska's average annual labor force estimates from 2000-2005.

Figure 1. Annual Labor Force Estimates 2000-2005

	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate	
				Nebraska	National
2005	986,296	949,070	37,226	3.8	5.1
2004	985,772	947,346	38,426	3.9	5.5
2003	975,639	936,736	38,903	4.0	6.0
2002	959,364	923,620	35,743	3.7	5.8
2001	956,879	926,926	29,953	3.1	4.7
2000	952,057	925,898	26,159	2.7	4.0

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Nebraska Workforce Development, 2006

In comparing Nebraska's unemployment rate to the national average, the state's rate has been significantly lower every year. One explanation for Nebraska's low unemployment rate is the level of participation in the labor force. The labor force participation rate is the number of people in the labor force divided by the total population age 16 and over (from U.S. Census 2000). Seventy-five percent of the population age 16 and over in Nebraska participates in the labor force, which is higher than the U.S. rate of 69 percent.

Labor force participation provides interesting insight into changes over time in the labor market and society. Labor force participation rates are not the most frequently reported labor market measures, yet they will become increasingly important to monitor as the baby-boom generation enters retirement.

Employment by Industry

The number of people employed in each industry assists in evaluating the state's economic base. In Nebraska, the top five industries account for 77.5 percent of the state's total private industry employment. These industries include (in order) Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (188,151); Education & Health Services (108,254); Manufacturing (101,338); Professional & Business Services (96,705); and Leisure & Hospitality

(79,077). In 2005, the top industry (Trade, Transportation, and Utilities) employed a quarter of the state's private industry workers and comprised 21 percent of the states total employment. This industry also supplies the state with the largest number of individually owned businesses. Nebraska employment by major industry is displayed in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Employment & Wages by Major Industry (NAICS)

Industry	Establishments	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Average Annual Wage	Total Wages
Private Ownership:					
Total, All Industries	53,045	739,721	\$615	\$32,003	\$23,673,181,825
Natural Resources & Mining	1,452	11,743	\$521	\$27,079	\$317,993,227
Construction	6,480	46,426	\$677	\$35,218	\$1,635,008,813
Manufacturing	2,065	101,338	\$703	\$36,570	\$3,705,935,253
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	14,242	188,151	\$547	\$28,466	\$5,356,003,549
Information	951	20,382	\$882	\$45,887	\$935,252,128
Financial Activities	5,843	61,629	\$848	\$44,094	\$2,717,470,745
Professional & Business Services	8,077	96,705	\$759	\$39,480	\$3,817,962,438
Education & Health Services	4,677	108,254	\$659	\$34,283	\$3,711,249,284
Leisure & Hospitality	4,757	79,077	\$215	\$11,174	\$883,612,251
Other Services	4,499	26,016	\$438	\$22,782	\$592,694,137
Government Ownership:					
Total Government	3,628	152,844	\$662	\$34,436	\$5,263,290,437
Local Government	2,078	104,367	\$591	\$30,728	\$3,207,051,374
State Government	1,010	32,156	\$735	\$38,207	\$1,228,591,471
Federal Government	540	16,320	\$975	\$50,713	\$827,647,592
Total All Industry/Ownership:	56,673	892,565	\$623	\$32,419	\$28,936,472,262

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, 2006

By looking at historical employment in Figure 3 below, it becomes apparent that there has been growth in some industries while others have experienced a decline. Education & Health Services has experienced the most growth in employment since 2001 at a rate of 9.5 percent. The Construction industry experienced the second highest increase in employment since 2001 of nearly 6 percent.

Since 2001, the Information industry has experienced the most significant fluctuation in employment declining at a rate of nearly 20 percent. Although the Manufacturing industry is the third largest industry in the state in terms of employment, it experienced the second greatest decline in employment from 2001 to 2005 at 8 percent.

Figure 3. Historical Employment by Industry

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Natural Resources & Mining	11,190	10,752	11,038	11,250	11,739
Construction	43,811	44,647	46,209	47,050	46,425
Manufacturing	110,531	105,199	101,911	100,647	101,337
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	186,267	184,504	184,672	185,403	188,142
Information	25,771	24,690	21,452	21,445	20,363
Financial Activities	59,448	58,618	59,458	60,043	61,616
Professional & Business Services	97,143	92,053	91,528	94,438	96,665
Education & Health Services	98,828	100,931	104,558	106,680	108,245
Leisure & Hospitality	76,831	76,698	77,579	77,553	79,036
Other Services	25,599	25,582	25,876	25,905	25,998
Government	148,428	150,390	150,969	151,850	152,844
All Industries/Ownerships	883,848	874,050	875,277	882,230	892,565

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2006

Another aspect to consider in determining the impact of a given industry on the economy is its location quotient. The location quotient indicates the concentration of employment in an industry at the statewide level relative to its concentration at the national level. The state location quotient is calculated by dividing each industry's employment by total employment, and then by the national ratio. Industries with location quotients over 1.0 serve consumers outside of Nebraska and bring revenue in to the area. When the location quotient is less than 1.0, the industry is likely to be driven by the consumption of goods and services within the state. The higher the location quotient, the less dependent the industry is on state consumption.

In 2005, The Trade, Transportation & Utilities, and Information industries both had location quotients greater than 1.1. This means that Nebraska is an exporter of these products and the demand is most likely driven by national pressures. Location quotients for 2001-2005 are shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Location Quotient

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Natural Resources & Mining	0.97	0.96	0.99	1.00	1.02
Construction	0.96	0.99	1.02	1.01	0.96
Manufacturing	1.00	1.03	1.04	1.05	1.07
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	1.08	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.10
Information	1.07	1.09	1.00	1.03	1.00
Financial Activities	1.15	1.13	1.12	1.13	1.15
Professional & Business Services	0.88	0.86	0.85	0.86	0.86
Education & Health Services	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.99	0.98
Leisure & Hospitality	0.96	0.95	0.94	0.92	0.93
Other Services	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90

Note: Location Quotient red when greater than or equal to 1.1

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2006

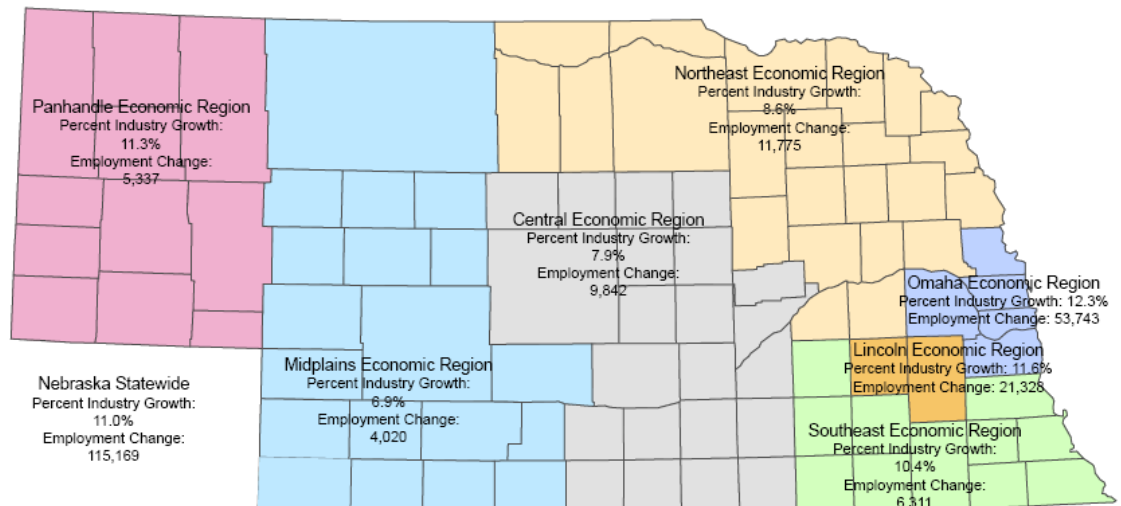
B. What industries and occupations are projected to grow and/or decline in the short term and over the next decade?

Industry Projections

Long-Term

Over a ten-year period (using 2004-2014 industry projections), it is anticipated that Nebraska will see industry growth at a rate of 11 percent with some areas having more rapid growth than the statewide average. Industries expected to grow most rapidly are in the Omaha Economic Region (12.3%), Lincoln Economic Region (11.6%) and the Panhandle Economic Region (11.3%) of the state. A map of projected industry growth by region is displayed in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Nebraska Projected Industry Growth 2004-2014 by Region



Source: Nebraska Workforce Development, 2004-2014 Industry Projections

Several of Nebraska's industries are projected to experience significant growth by 2014. The top five industries expected to see the largest growth rates are Health Care & Social Assistance (24.2%), Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation (23.8%), Transportation & Warehousing (22.3%), Administrative & Waste Management Services (20.1%) and Real Estate, Rental & Leasing (17.8%). The following industries are likely to see a decline: Mining (11.8%), Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing (6.8%), and Utilities (1.3%). Manufacturing will likely experience a very minor decline of less than one percent. Projected industry growth from 2004-2014 is displayed by order of change in Figure 6.

Figure 6. 2004-2014 Industry Projections

Industry Title	2004 Annual Employment	2014 Projected Employment	Change in Employment 2004-2014	% Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	112,182	139,273	27,091	24.2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	10,591	13,115	2,524	23.8
Transportation and Warehousing	46,910	57,385	10,475	22.3
Administrative & Waste Management Services	42,971	51,616	8,645	20.1
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	9,388	11,063	1,675	17.8
Information	20,176	23,264	3,088	15.3
Finance and Insurance	53,430	60,794	7,364	13.8
Other Services (except Government)	37,525	42,619	5,094	13.6
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	34,033	38,370	4,337	12.7
Accommodation and Food Services	66,665	75,151	8,486	12.7
Educational Services (including state and local government)	95,650	107,810	12,160	12.7
Retail Trade	106,442	119,846	13,404	12.6
Construction	45,534	50,714	5,180	11.4
Wholesale Trade	38,572	41,113	2,541	6.6
Government	77,586	82,363	4,777	6.2
Management of Companies and Enterprises	13,182	13,706	524	4.0
Manufacturing	100,657	100,055	-602	-0.6
Utilities	1,587	1,566	-21	-1.3
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	60,993	56,848	-4,145	-6.8
Mining	1,258	1,110	-148	-11.8

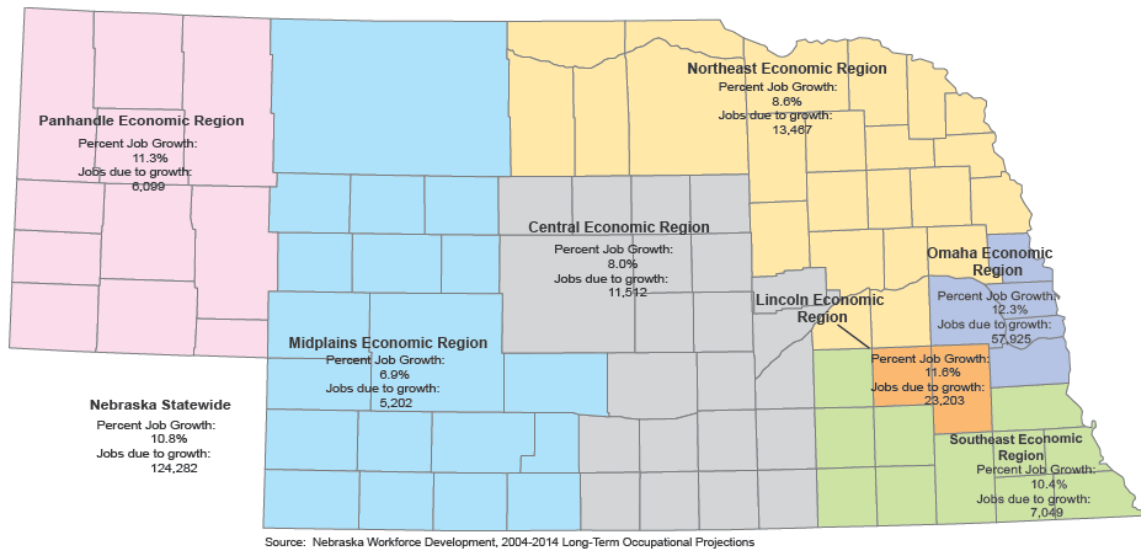
Source: Nebraska Workforce Development 2006, 2004-2014 Industry Projections

Occupation Projections

Long-Term

In a ten-year period (using 2004-2014 Occupation projections) Nebraska is expected to see job growth at a rate of 10.8% statewide with some areas having more rapid growth than the statewide average. Collectively, it is expected that 124,282 jobs will be added statewide with the most jobs (57,925) being added in the Omaha Economic Region of the State. A map of projected job growth by region for the state of Nebraska is shown below.

Nebraska Projected Job Growth 2004-2014 by Region



The specific occupations which are growing and declining across the state are an important component to job growth over the next decade. Two factors, overall numeric change and percent change, play a role in whether or not an occupation is growing or declining. Figure 8 shows occupational projections by major group for the state listed by greatest to least change in employment.

Figure 8. 2004-2014 Long-Term Occupation Projections

Occupation Title	Estimated Employment 2004	Projected Employment 2014	Change in Employment 2004-2014
Total, All Occupations	1,047,190	1,160,718	113,528
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	55,449	68,092	12,643
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	75,582	87,170	11,588
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	63,056	72,374	9,318
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	84,826	93,707	8,881
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	165,641	173,700	8,059
Sales and Related Occupations	101,807	109,593	7,786
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	40,877	47,253	6,376
Healthcare Support Occupations	25,817	32,063	6,246
Construction and Extraction Occupations	52,570	58,790	6,220
Production Occupations	84,047	89,869	5,822
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	21,560	27,084	5,524
Management Occupations	51,891	57,414	5,523
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	35,935	40,916	4,981
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	44,730	49,362	4,632
Personal Care and Service Occupations	26,577	30,456	3,879
Community and Social Services Occupations	15,277	18,335	3,058
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	15,890	17,719	1,829
Protective Service Occupations	15,319	16,551	1,232
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	10,041	11,264	1,223
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	11,524	12,589	1,065
Legal Occupations	5,680	6,048	368
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	43,094	40,369	-2,725

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development 2004, 2004-2014 Occupation Projections

In order of numeric change, the top five occupation groups which are expected to experience an increase in employment over the decade are: Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations (12,643), Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations (11,588), Education, Training, & Library Occupations (9,318), Transportation & Material Moving Occupations (8,881) and Office & Administrative Support Occupations (8,059).

When looking at percent change rather than overall numeric change, a different set of occupational groups emerge as leading occupations. The top five occupational groups by percent change are: Computer & Mathematical Occupations (25.62%), Healthcare Support Occupations (24.19%), Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations (22.80%), Community & Social Services Occupations (20.02%), and Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations (15.33%).

The only occupational group expected to decline over the decade is Farming, Fishing and Forestry occupations.

The occupations listed in Figure 9 represent the occupations with the highest number of annual openings. The table also shows the occupation's projected growth rate over the decade. It is important to note that the jobs with the greatest number of openings may not reflect the fastest growing occupations; however, these occupations consistently employ large numbers of people across the state.

Figure 9. Top Ten Occupations with Most Openings 2004-2014

Occupation Title	Growth Rate (2004-2014)	Estimated Annual Openings
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	4.87%	4,997
Sales and Related Occupations	7.65%	4,181
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	15.33%	4,157
Retail Sales Workers	9.51%	2,903
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	10.47%	2,732
Production Occupations	6.93%	2,714
Food and Beverage Serving Workers	15.93%	2,547
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	22.80%	2,345
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	14.78%	2,312
Construction and Extraction Occupations	11.83%	1,677

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development 2006, 2004-2014 Occupation Projections

Short-Term

In the short term, the following occupations are expected to experience the highest growth rates: Computer & Mathematical (5.89%), Healthcare Practitioners & Technical (5.22%), Healthcare Support (5.11%), Community & Social Services (4.38%) and Business & Financial Operations (4.14%). Occupations with a growth rate plus or minus one percent are considered to be stable. Farming, Fishing & Forestry (-0.67) and Production (0.64%) occupations are the only groups expected to remain stable. Figure 10 shows short-term projections for occupations by major group.

Figure 10. 2005-2007 Short-Term Occupation Projections

Occupation Title	Estimated Employment 2005	Projected Employment 2007	Change in Employment 2005-2007	Growth Rate
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	22,114	23,416	1,302	5.89%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	55,575	58,477	2,902	5.22%
Healthcare Support Occupations	26,303	27,647	1,344	5.11%
Community and Social Services Occupations	15,633	16,317	684	4.38%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	41,931	43,668	1,737	4.14%
Legal Occupations	5,806	6,027	221	3.81%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	27,411	28,375	964	3.52%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	53,351	55,209	1,858	3.48%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	10,208	10,563	355	3.48%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	11,620	12,021	401	3.45%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	86,827	89,420	2,593	2.99%
Management Occupations	53,321	54,834	1,513	2.84%
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	64,975	66,679	1,704	2.62%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	78,231	80,255	2,024	2.59%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	16,076	16,476	400	2.49%
Total, All Occupations	1,063,996	1,090,059	26,063	2.45%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	36,770	37,655	885	2.41%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	42,068	42,820	752	1.79%
Protective Service Occupations	15,700	15,953	253	1.61%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	169,559	172,078	2,519	1.49%
Sales and Related Occupations	102,856	104,253	1,397	1.36%
Production Occupations	84,654	85,196	542	0.64%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	43,007	42,720	-287	-0.67%

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development 2006, 2005-2007 Occupation Projections

Projected demand is no guarantee of an available workforce. Compensation for workers in terms of wages and benefits must also be considered. Compensation is often one of the most persuading factors for workers choosing an occupation; therefore, there may be a correlation between the wage offered for a particular job and the number of applicants. Specifically, workers may not be as willing to commit to an occupation with a lower wage. Nebraska average wages by major occupation group are reflected in order from highest to lowest average wage in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Average Wages by Major Occupational Group

Occupation Group	Empl.	Hourly Avg.	Annual Avg.	
			Nebraska	National
Management Occupations	31,160	\$38.15	\$79,355	\$88,450
Legal Occupations	4,430	\$33.85	\$70,414	\$81,070
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	10,690	\$29.11	\$60,559	\$63,910
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	20,130	\$28.86	\$60,023	\$67,100
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	48,600	\$26.78	\$55,689	\$59,170
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	34,880	\$25.11	\$52,238	\$57,930
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	8,360	\$23.82	\$49,540	\$58,030
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	53,360	\$19.78	\$41,138	\$43,450
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	10,960	\$17.06	\$35,485	\$44,310
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	35,800	\$16.73	\$34,794	\$38,050
Construction and Extraction Occupations	42,910	\$16.55	\$34,421	\$38,260
Total all occupations	881,790	\$16.47	\$34,274	\$37,870
Protective Service Occupations	13,940	\$15.88	\$33,048	\$35,750
Community and Social Services Occupations	13,080	\$15.16	\$31,539	\$37,530
Sales and Related Occupations	94,070	\$14.43	\$30,017	\$32,800
Production Occupations	81,180	\$13.93	\$28,965	\$29,890
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	74,260	\$13.71	\$28,532	\$28,820
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	155,790	\$13.10	\$27,254	\$29,710
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	2,810	\$11.63	\$24,186	\$21,010
Healthcare Support Occupations	24,260	\$11.21	\$23,326	\$23,850
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	28,620	\$10.17	\$21,151	\$21,930
Personal Care and Service Occupations	17,490	\$9.74	\$20,255	\$22,180
Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations	75,020	\$8.12	\$16,875	\$17,840

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development, Occupational Employment Statistics, 2nd Quarter 2006

In addition to wages, many workers consider a benefit package offered by their employer as a significant portion of their overall compensation. The 2004 Nebraska Employee Benefits Survey was conducted to gain a better understanding of the types of benefits Nebraska employers offer to their workers. Overall, 85 percent of Nebraska employers offer health insurance to their employees. Percentages of employers that offer selected benefits to their full-time and part-time employees are represented in Figure 12 below.

Figure 12. Percentage of Nebraska Employers Offering Selected Benefits

	Offered to:	
	FT	PT
Insurance		
Health Insurance*	85.2%	
Dental Insurance	40.3%	9.8%
Vision Insurance	24.6%	7.0%
Short-term Disability Insurance	27.4%	6.1%
Long-term Disability Insurance	33.5%	7.3%
Life Insurance	50.3%	11.7%
Retirement		
Retirement Plan	59.0%	26.1%
Defined Contribution Retirement**	92.7%	39.7%
Defined Benefit Retirement**	29.6%	11.1%
Paid Time Off		
Paid Vacation Leave	81.8%	23.5%
Paid Sick Leave	54.0%	11.8%
Paid Holidays	77.0%	24.4%
Other Benefits		
Education Assistance	28.8%	10.8%
Bonuses	54.2%	27.5%
Flexible Spending Accounts	32.8%	11.2%

* Health insurance question was not asked by FT/PT status

** Of companies offering a retirement plan, percent offering Defined

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development, Benefits Report 2004

As can be seen from the discussion above, wages, benefits, and number of openings are all issues that will affect how projected growth in industries and occupations will be accommodated by the state's workforce.

C. In what industries and occupations is there a demand for skilled workers and available jobs, both today and projected over the next decade? In what numbers?

The Nebraska Job Vacancy Survey provides demand indicators of workforce shortages that can assist in the effort to understand and interpret the need for labor in the current economy. The number of job vacancies, the job vacancy rate, and the duration of job vacancies, when viewed together, give a picture of occupations that are in demand, experiencing significant turnover, or reflect relative balance. Characteristics of occupations can be analyzed to determine how they contribute to the supply and demand of occupations. Attributes in this report include: temporary or seasonal work; part time work; education requirements; experience requirements; and average wage offered. Data depicted in the charts reflect employer responses to the 2006, 2nd quarter job vacancy survey mailed to a stratified sample of 3,002 Nebraska businesses.

Job Vacancies by Major Occupational Group

Figure 13. Job Vacancies by Major Occupational Group

Major Occupation Group	Demand Indicators				Other Characteristics				
	Number of Job Vacancies	Employment Estimate of Total Filled Jobs*	Job Vacancy Rate %	Constantly Hiring %	Temporary or Seasonal %	Part Time %	Requiring Field or Occupational Experience %	Requiring Education Beyond High School %	Average Wage Offer \$***
Office and Administrative Support	4,211	155,790	2.7	20.7	12.8	31.2	20.9	21.8	10.06
Food Preparation and Serving-Related	3,773	75,020	5.0	58.0	6.4	59.7	9.2	0.4	6.73
Sales and Related	2,863	94,070	3.0	41.4	0.4	54.5	16.0	5.1	8.61
Production	2,614	81,180	3.2	47.0	1.9	2.6	32.3	11.1	11.08
Transportation and Material Moving	2,600	74,260	3.5	51.0	22.0	30.9	31.2	14.7	11.58
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	2,229	2,810	79.3	3.0	78.2	73.8	3.8	0.4	7.47
Personal Care and Service	2,061	17,490	11.8	75.5	3.5	20.0	84.7	73.6	7.84
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	2,049	48,600	4.2	40.9	9.1	43.4	48.6	96.0	19.24
Healthcare Support	1,697	24,260	7.0	62.6	12.1	59.9	33.0	67.1	10.07
Construction and Extraction	1,506	42,910	3.5	27.4	8.8	12.9	63.0	10.8	12.33
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	1,426	35,800	4.0	28.3	2.2	3.4	69.2	41.1	12.58
Business and Financial Operations	1,347	34,880	3.9	10.8	6.0	10.5	75.4	73.3	19.56
Education, Training, and Library	1,243	53,360	2.3	34.6	56.0	54.3	50.4	85.0	22.00
Community and Social Services	1,115	13,080	8.5	5.7	7.1	34.3	29.1	25.7	10.95
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	638	28,620	2.2	35.3	32.1	49.8	15.2	-	8.02
Computer and Mathematical	489	20,130	2.4	-	0.4	2.7	76.3	95.3	23.54
Protective Service	302	13,940	2.2	17.5	40.7	27.2	13.6	2.3	8.68
Architecture and Engineering	291	10,690	2.7	6.9	3.1	-	62.9	99.3	27.32
Life, Physical, and Social Science	183	8,360	2.2	2.2	4.4	6.6	60.7	91.8	20.68
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	175	10,960	1.6	45.7	-	24.6	45.1	29.7	10.42
Legal	37	4,430	0.8	-	8.1	8.1	43.2	59.5	19.82
Firm Size**									
Very Small (1-4 employees)	4,210	48,789	8.6	23.8	12.2	21.8	51.4	42.9	10.58
Small (5-49 employees)	12,486	317,959	3.9	40.6	18.9	41.3	35.5	28.2	9.75
Medium (50-249 employees)	10,029	256,313	3.9	46.2	10.3	40.5	33.5	35.4	13.24
Large (250 or more employees)	6,709	282,466	2.4	23.1	16.2	26.1	30.7	29.5	13.72
Statewide Overall	33,434	907,527	3.7	36.7	14.9	35.5	36.	32.5	11.70

* Employment estimates of total filled jobs by Occupation are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) 2005 survey data.

**Employment estimates of total filled jobs by Firm Size are from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage (QCEW) 2004, 1st quarter data.

***Occupation wages are based on the average wage offers reported by employers.

- No responses in these categories

Source: Job Vacancy Survey, 2nd Quarter 2006

A review of survey results in Figure 13 above identifies 33,434 vacancies statewide with an overall job vacancy rate of 3.7 percent. By size class, very small businesses reported the highest vacancy rate of 8.6 percent, and large firms had

the lowest rate of 2.4 percent. Large firms reported constantly hiring for a quarter (23.1%) of their job vacancies, while medium firms reported 46.2 percent in this category.

The occupation group with the most job vacancies was Office & Administrative Support, with 4,211 vacancies and a job vacancy rate of 2.7 percent. Employers reported constantly hiring for a fifth (20.7%) of the vacancies in this group. Almost half (48.0%) of the state's vacancies fell into the five occupation groups of Office & Administrative Support (12.6%), Food Preparation & Serving-related (11.3%), Sales & Related (8.6%), Production (7.8%) and Transportation & Material Moving (7.8%). Several occupation groups that have a higher percentage of employers requiring post high school education and occupational experience in addition to reporting a high constantly hiring rate include: Personal Care & Service, Healthcare Practitioners & Technical, Healthcare Support, as well as Education, Training & Support. This group accounted for 21% of the vacancies.

The occupation group with the highest statewide job vacancy rate was Farming, Fishing, and Forestry (79.3%), with 78.2 percent of the vacancies temporary positions. Personal Care & Service occupations had the second highest job vacancy rate of 11.8 percent, with a three quarters (75.5%) of the vacancies reported constantly hiring.

Job Vacancies by Major Industry

Figure 14. Job Vacancies by Major Industry

Industry	Demand Indicators				Other Characteristics				
	Number of Job Vacancies	Employment Estimate of Total Filled Jobs	Job Vacancy Rate %	Constantly Hiring %	Temporary or Seasonal %	Part Time %	Requiring Field or Occupational Experience %	Requiring Education Beyond High School %	Average Wage Offer \$
Health Care & Social Assistance	4,743	122,304	3.9	28.	7.9	45.6	37.0	44.8	11.95
Administrative&Sprt&Waste Mgt&Remediatn	3,864	45,013	8.6	60.	13.	35.7	33.9	31.1	12.13
Accommodation & Food Services	3,635	72,799	4.9	57.	8.6	59.7	13.6	0.1	6.61
Retail Trade	2,841	109,309	2.6	31.	1.0	54.4	17.8	9.3	8.42
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	2,613	36,357	6.9	15.	14.	24.5	34.2	62.0	14.85
Manufacturing	2,467	106,656	2.3	25.	3.3	3.1	23.8	15.6	12.09
Natural Resources and Mining	2,170	13,079	16.6	1.8	79.	73.1	2.9	1.9	7.52
Other Services (except Public	2,143	26,082	8.2	77.	0.5	2.9	92.8	82.1	8.55
Education Services	1,873	78,168	2.4	23.	41.	47.8	46.9	72.1	19.53
Construction	1,626	47,550	3.4	37.	5.6	12.4	70.0	15.5	12.52
Transportation & Warehousing	1,357	38,942	3.5	80.	30.	40.3	40.5	23.3	13.79
Finance & Insurance	1,153	56,748	2.0	15.	0.7	6.5	57.9	51.5	19.69
Wholesale Trade	850	39,042	2.2	24.	4.7	15.6	24.7	18.7	10.90
Public Administration	842	49,797	1.7	5.1	22.	18.6	46.0	50.7	13.41
Management of Companies & Enterprises	664	15,161	4.4	28.	6.6	15.5	49.5	27.9	14.26
Information	361	20,926	1.7	16.	0.6	17.7	36.2	29.4	12.80
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	243	12,511	1.9	45.	6.6	66.3	17.7	16.5	6.29
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	109	7,371	1.5			7.3	78.0	22.0	18.36
Utilities	80	9,712	0.8		8.8	1.3	56.3	73.8	25.34
Part Time	11,884			41.8	33.2		21.4	22.4	9.91
Full Time	21,550			33.8	4.8		44.0	38.0	12.69
Statewide Overall	33,434	907,527	3.7	36.7	14.9	35.5	36.0	32.5	11.70

Source: Job Vacancy Survey, 2nd Quarter 2006

Job vacancies by major industry can be viewed in Figure 14 on the previous page. When viewed together, the three demand indicators - number of job vacancies, job vacancy rate, and duration of openings (constantly hiring, an indication of job turnover) - help us view the demand for labor in a given industry.

Health Care & Social Assistance had the most job vacancies statewide, with 4,743 openings, a job vacancy rate of 3.9 percent, with 28.2 percent of the vacancies constantly being hired. This industry has 14.2 percent of the state's job vacancies and 13.5 percent of the state's employment. Almost half of the survey responders for this industry require education beyond high school and occupational experience, which narrows the pipeline of eligible job candidates to meet the demand.

The Natural Resources & Mining industry had the highest statewide job vacancy rate of 16.6 percent. Of the 2,170 vacant positions in the industry, 79.4 percent were temporary or seasonal. This industry reported less than 3 percent of the jobs have requirements of education beyond high school or occupational experience, which broadens the pool of potential job candidates. The minimal pre-requisites, temporary or seasonal nature of the vacancies and the average wage offer likely contribute to a higher vacancy rate.

While job vacancy rates provide a picture of current demand, another factor in projecting job openings in the state is to look at which occupations offer the hottest job prospects. "Hot Jobs" are a list of occupations that can be considered to have above average job prospects in the state. Hot Jobs are ranked based on a weighted index of the following variables: projected employment growth, projected average annual compound growth rate, and projected average annual openings. Nebraska's Projected "Hot Jobs" for the decade ending in 2014 are listed in Figure 15.

Figure 15. Top 20 Hot Jobs 2004-2014

Occupation Title	Growth Rate (2004-2014)	Estimated Annual Openings
Registered Nurses	27.53%	935
Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	15.28%	949
Customer Service Representatives	25.26%	728
Retail Salespersons	10.72%	1402
Waiters and Waitresses	15.93%	1075
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	16.78%	973
Cashiers	8.35%	1270
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	14.87%	543
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	17.17%	414
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	11.16%	378
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	13.71%	324
Child Care Workers	17.46%	336
Office Clerks, General	5.32%	502
Accountants and Auditors	15.84%	300
Computer Software Engineers, Applications	43.15%	189
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	18.53%	284
Teacher Assistants	13.68%	308
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	14.85%	307
Receptionists and Information Clerks	15.46%	311
Carpenters	12.30%	286

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development, 2006

D. What jobs/occupations are most critical to the State's economy?

Critical occupations were identified using three main criteria.

Occupations were evaluated based on fulfilling a need within Nebraska's primary industries, typically offer full-time status to employees and were identified for future economic growth (i.e., they are expected to have high employment change over the next decade, above average rate of growth, and typically offer above median wages). The table (Figure 16) below identifies the top 30 non-duplicated occupations applying these criteria.

Figure 16. Nebraska Critical Occupations

Accountants and Auditors
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists
Carpenters
Computer Software Engineers, Applications
Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software
Computer Support Specialists
Computer Systems Analysts
Customer Service Representatives
Dental Assistants
Electricians
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education
General and Operations Managers
Home Health Aides
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers
Medical Assistants
Network and Computer Systems Administrators
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants
Pharmacists
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians
Registered Nurses
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing
Slaughterers and Meat Packers
Social and Human Service Assistants
Team Assemblers
Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer
Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development 2006, 2004-2014 Occupation Projections

Source: Occupational Employment Statistics, 2nd Quarter 2006

Source: Nebraska Workforce Development 2006, 2004-2014 Industry Projections

E. What are the skill needs for the available, critical and projected jobs?

The top 30 occupations identified in the previous section currently employ large numbers of workers, are critical to future economic growth, and are projected to continue to have the same or an increasing level of employment to 2014. Identifying required skills, abilities, work activities, and education/training requirements for these occupations will make it easier to recognize and plan to address both current and future worker shortages.

Figure 17 on the following pages link the top 30 occupations with key skills, work activities, and requirements.

Figure 17. Skill Needs for Top 30 Occupations

Occupation Title	Top Skill	Top Abilities & Work Activities	Most Common Educational Requirement	License or Certification Requirement	Average Active Licenses
Accountants and Auditors	Mathematics	Problem Sensitivity, Interacting with Computers	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	C.P.A (Accountant's only)	1,896
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	Mechanical	Equipment Maintenance, Troubleshooting	High School Diploma and On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	Equipment Maintenance	Problem Sensitivity, Repairing and Maintaining Mechanical Equipment	High School Diploma and On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Carpenters	Mathematics	Arm-hand steadiness, Controlling Machines and Processes,	High School Diploma and On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Computer Software Engineers, Applications	Programming	Deductive Reasoning, Interacting with Computers	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software	Complex Problem Solving	Deductive Reasoning, Interacting with Computers	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Computer Support Specialists	Troubleshooting	Inductive Reasoning, Interacting with Computers	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Computer Systems Analysts	Active Learning	Oral Comprehension, Interacting with Computers	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Customer Service Representatives	Monitoring	Oral Expression, Getting Information	High School Diploma or Associate's Degree	None	N/A

Dental Assistants	Active Listening	Oral Expression, Assisting and Caring for Others	Associate's Degree or other Two-year Certificate	None	N/A
Electricians	Installation	Arm-Hand Steadiness, Making Decisions & Solving Problems	Training Certificate, Apprenticeship	License from the State Electrical Board	1,640
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	Instructing	Oral Expression, Organizing, Planning and Prioritizing Work	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Teaching Certificate from Nebraska Department of Education	29,677
General and Operations Managers	Active Listening	Oral Expression, Getting Information	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Home Health Aides	Active Listening	Oral Comprehension, Assisting and Caring for Others	High School Diploma and On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Active Listening	Oral Comprehension, Documenting and Recording Information	Associate's Degree or other Two-year Certificate	License from Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	4,540
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	Equipment Maintenance	Problem Sensitivity, Inspecting Equipment, Structures, or Material	High School Diploma and On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	Active Listening	Problem Sensitivity, Handling Moving Objects	High School Diploma and On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Medical Assistants	Active Listening	Oral Comprehension, Assisting and Caring for Others	Associate's Degree or other Two-year Certificate	None	N/A
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Reading Comprehension	Near Vision, Interacting with Computers	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	Equipment Selection	Near Vision, Interacting with Computers	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	Active Listening	Problem Sensitivity, Assisting and Caring for Others	High School Diploma, Training Certificate and On-The-Job Training	Nursing Aid Certification from Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	21,557

Pharmacists	Active Listening	Oral Expression, Getting Information	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	License from Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	2,511
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	Active Listening	Problem Sensitivity, Assisting and Caring for Others	Associate's Degree or other Two-year Certificate	None	N/A
Registered Nurses	Active Listening	Problem Sensitivity, Assisting and Caring for Others	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	License from Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	20,129
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	Active Listening	Oral Expression, Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	None	N/A
Slaughterers and Meat Packers	Not Specified	Manual Dexterity, Handling Moving Objects	High School Diploma or On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Social and Human Service Assistants	Active Listening	Oral Expression, Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Some Positions Require Being Licensed as a Mental Health Professional by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	662
Team Assemblers	Learning Strategies	Manual Dexterity, Handling Moving Objects	High School Diploma or On-The-Job Training	None	N/A
Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	Equipment Maintenance	Far Vision, Operating Vehicles, Mechanized Devices or Equipment	High School Diploma or On-The-Job Training	Commercial Drivers License (CDL) from Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles	51,634
Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	Active Listening	Multilimb Coordination, Operating Vehicles, Mechanized Devices or Equipment	High School Diploma or On-The-Job Training	Commercial Drivers License (CDL) from Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles	51,634

F. What is the current and projected demographics of the available labor pool (including the incumbent workforce) both now and over the next decade?

In 2000, the census recorded Nebraska's population at 1,711,263. By 2005, Nebraska's population was estimated at 1,758,787 according to population estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. In that five year span, Nebraska's population grew at a rate of 2.8 percent or 47,524 individuals. It is expected that Nebraska' population will keep increasing, and by the year 2020 it will surpass two million. Most of this increase is expected from in-migration.

Nationally, the average population increase is expected to be 1.0 percent per year. Figure 18 below compares population projections for Nebraska and the United States.

Figure 18. Projected Population and Growth Rates 1990-2020 for Nebraska and the United States

	Actual 1990	Actual 2000	% Change 1990-2000	Projected 2005	% Change 2000-2005	Projected 2010	% Change 2005-2010	Projected 2015	% Change 2010-2020	Projected 2020
Nebraska	1,578,385	1,711,263	8.42%	1,789,942	4.60%	1,877,214	4.88%	1,976,842	5.31%	2,085,210
United States	248,709,873	281,421,908	13.15%	295,507,134	5.01%	308,935,581	4.54%	322,365,787	4.35%	335,804,546

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division (1980, 1990, and 2000 Census)

Source: University of Nebraska--Lincoln, Bureau of Business Research Population Projections

By age group, projected change in population indicates that Nebraska will experience a surge in the population age 60-74 of 66.6 percent. The only population group expected to experience a decline is 40-54 year olds (8.3%). Population estimates through the year 2020 by age group are depicted in Figure 19 below.

Figure 19. Nebraska Projected Population Estimates by Age Group

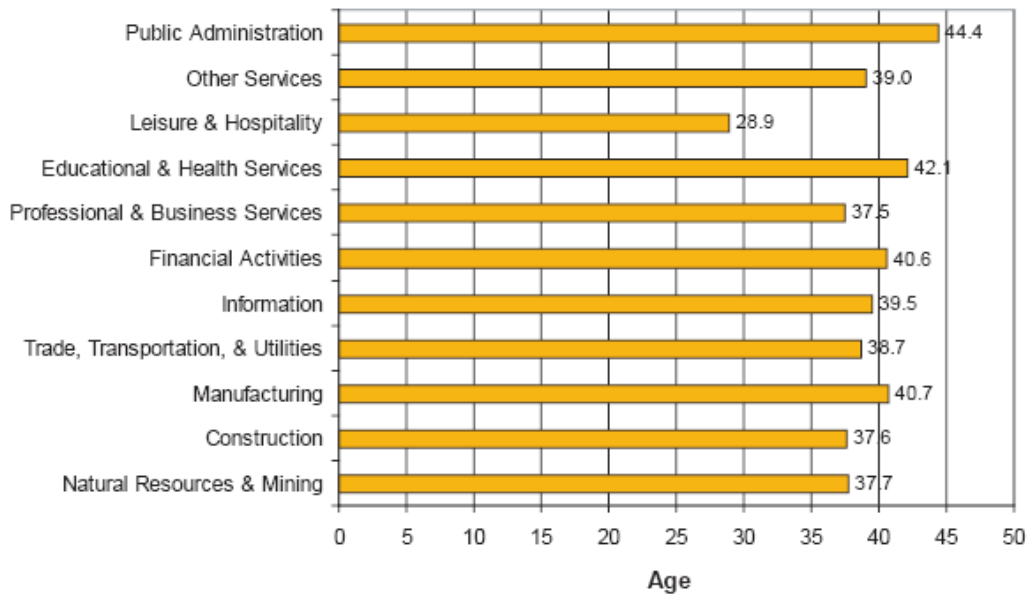
Age	Census*			Projections**				Population Growth Rates (%)			
	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	1990/ 1980	2000/ 1990	2010/ 2000	2020/ 2010
< 5	122,946	121,173	117,048	131,727	140,286	149,612	157,680	-1.4	-3.4	19.9	12.4
5-9	118,045	126,044	123,445	122,533	137,775	146,719	156,420	6.8	-2.1	11.6	13.5
10-14	120,907	117,093	128,934	127,669	126,765	142,491	151,662	-3.2	10.1	-1.7	19.6
15-19	147,249	113,345	134,909	133,025	132,472	132,459	148,308	-23	19	-1.8	12
20-24	148,734	109,014	120,331	135,067	134,018	136,150	138,323	-26.7	10.4	11.4	3.2
25-29	134,794	124,975	112,049	114,045	129,480	128,476	131,415	-7.3	-10.3	15.6	1.5
30-34	114,407	131,893	111,224	116,355	118,796	134,644	133,421	15.3	-15.7	6.8	12.3
35-39	88,424	123,256	130,027	113,501	118,809	121,532	137,410	39.4	5.5	-8.6	15.7
40-44	75,350	105,311	133,807	130,144	113,664	119,229	121,893	39.8	27.1	-15.1	7.2
45-49	73,797	80,075	122,714	133,225	129,397	113,254	118,805	8.5	53.2	5.4	-8.2
50-54	76,856	68,724	103,040	120,607	130,828	127,199	111,281	-10.6	49.9	27	-14.9
55-59	75,104	66,964	77,584	100,836	118,016	128,257	124,701	-10.8	15.9	52.1	5.7
60-64	67,528	67,851	63,956	74,160	96,477	113,171	123,142	0.5	-5.7	50.8	27.6
65-69	61,481	64,018	59,391	59,513	69,197	90,318	106,200	4.1	-7.2	16.5	53.5
70-74	52,540	53,524	56,308	53,723	54,119	63,206	82,937	1.9	5.2	-3.9	53.2
75-79	39,987	44,181	47,991	47,880	46,089	46,773	55,099	10.5	8.6	-4	19.5
80-84	27,932	32,026	34,552	37,249	37,648	36,619	37,721	14.7	7.9	9	0.2
85+	23,744	28,918	33,953	38,683	43,378	46,735	48,794	21.8	17.4	27.8	12.5
Total	1,569,825	1,578,385	1,711,263	1,789,942	1,877,214	1,976,842	2,085,210	0.5	8.4	9.7	11.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division (1980, 1990, and 2000 Census)

Source: University of Nebraska--Lincoln, Bureau of Business Research Population Projections

Figure 20 shows the average age of workers in each of the industries. The average age for employees is in the upper end of the 30's and early 40's range for all industries except Leisure and Hospitality.

Figure 20. Average Age of Nebraska Workers by Industry



Source: Nebraska Workforce Development, Administrative Records 2005

Census estimates are the best source of population information; however, they do not include demographic information. A reliable source of the most current demographic figures for the population can be found in the *American Community Survey*, provided by the Census Bureau. Although the total population estimate reflected in the *American Community Survey* is slightly different from Census estimates, different groups of people within the population as a whole are correctly represented.

Two separate questions were asked to obtain a person's race and ethnicity. The first asked if the person is Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, while a second question asked the person's race, since Hispanics may be of any race. In the table shown on this page, the total minority count includes all individuals who are non-white, reported two or more races, or are of Hispanic origin. Figure 21 below shows a population comparison by sex, race, Hispanic origin, and minority status between the state of Nebraska and the United States.

Figure 21. Population by Sex, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Minority Status

	United States		Nebraska			
	Total	%	Total	%	Male	Female
Total Population	288,378,137	100.0%	1,706,976	100.0%	844,899	862,077
White	215,333,394	74.7%	1,529,471	89.6%	756,083	773,388
Black	34,962,569	12.1%	68,389	4.0%	33,623	34,766
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2,357,544	0.8%	13,250	0.8%	6,286	6,964
Asian	12,471,815	4.3%	24,820	1.5%	11,513	13,307
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	397,030	0.1%	557	0.0%	203	354
Other	17,298,601	6.0%	44,869	2.6%	24,616	20,253
Two or More Races	5,557,184	1.9%	25,620	1.5%	12,575	13,045
White not Hispanic	192,615,561	66.8%	1,457,549	85.4%	716,608	740,941
Hispanic Origin (of any Race)	41,870,703	14.5%	122,518	7.2%	66,896	55,622
Total Minority (non-white, 2 or more races, or Hispanic)	95,762,576	33.2%	249,427	14.6%	128,291	121,136

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2005

In Nebraska, minorities represent 14.6% of the total population. Hispanics are the largest minority group at 7.2% of the state population. Between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic population in Nebraska increased by 173% (from 36,969 in 1990 to 100,995 in 2000). It is likely that the Hispanic population will continue to be the fastest growing segment of Nebraska's population for the next several years.

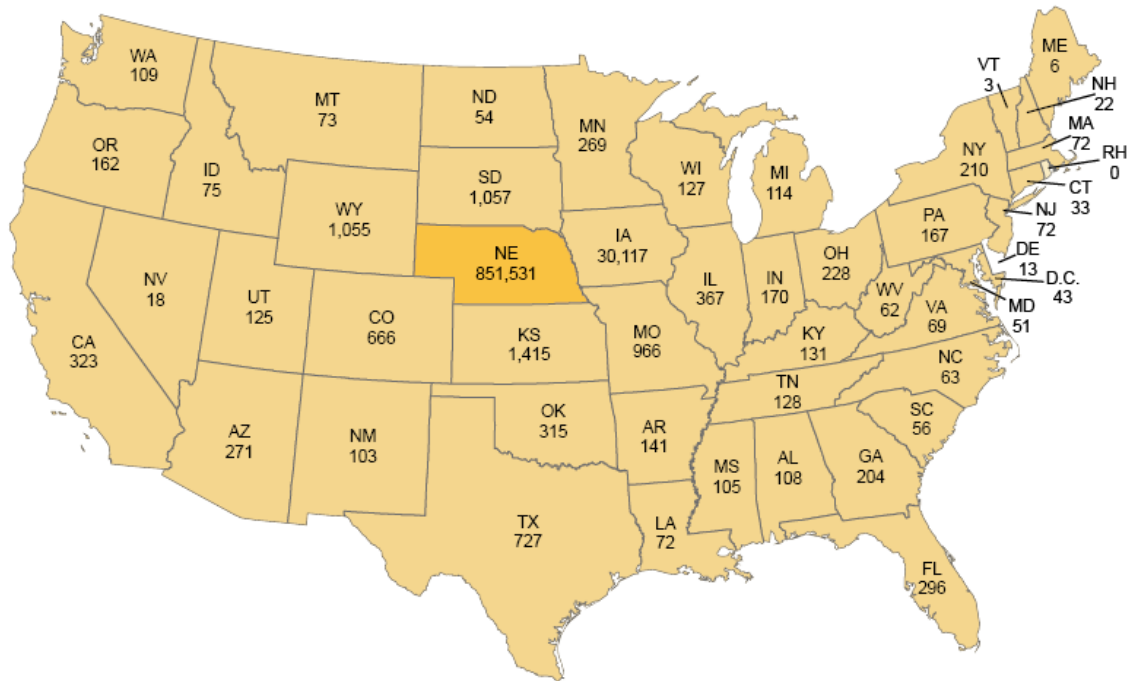
Nebraska has a much less diversified population than the United States as a whole. In Nebraska, 86.4 % of the population reported that they were white non-Hispanic. Nationally, white non-Hispanic people made up 66.8 % of the total population.

For most racial groups, the percentage of the population represented in Nebraska was less than half of the National percentage, with the exception of American Indian or Alaskan Native, which is equally represented in Nebraska and the United States.

G. Is the State experiencing any “in migration” or “out migration” of workers that impact the labor pool?

The map in Figure 22 shows the number of workers commuting into Nebraska for work and from which state they are commuting. The map is populated with data compiled from Census 2000 responses to the long-form (sample) questions on where people worked and is updated every ten years. Commuting data is used to identify the boundaries of the labor pool, which will likely influence the potential for business growth. Alaska and Hawaii are not displayed on the map because there are not any commuters from these regions.

Figure 21. Commuting Into Nebraska for Work



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

The map in Figure 22 displays the number of workers commuting out of Nebraska and to which state they are commuting for work. Hawaii is not depicted on this map because there are no workers commuting from Nebraska.

Map of the United States showing the number of people in each state in 2000. The states are colored in shades of orange and yellow. The number of people is written in the center of each state. The state of Nebraska is highlighted in a darker orange color.

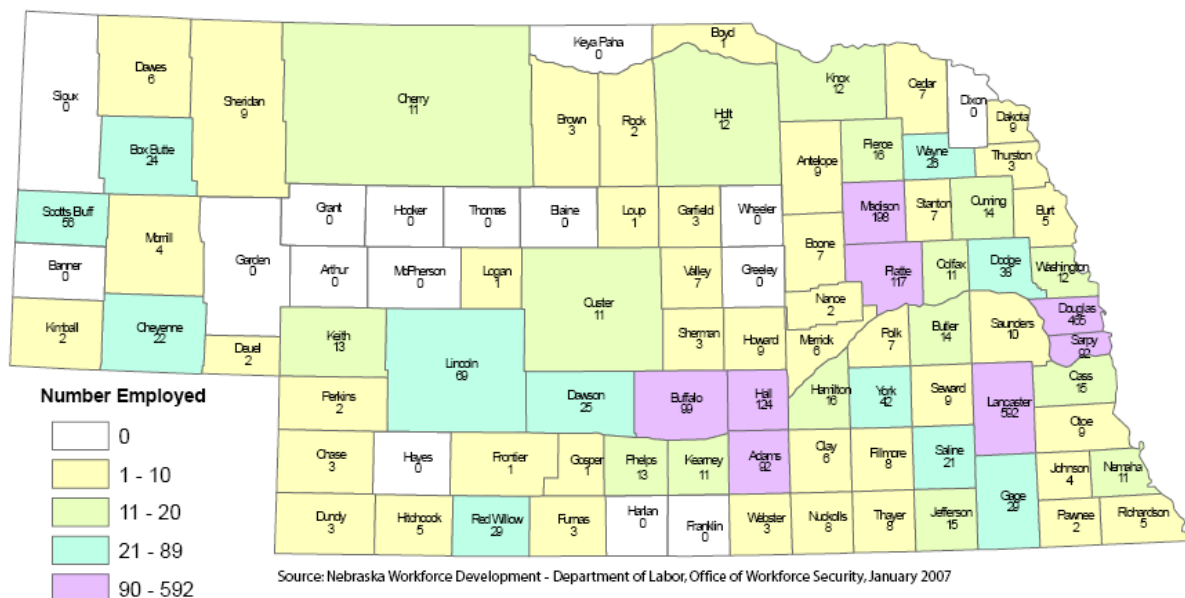
State	Number of People
AK	22
AL	20
AR	45
AZ	56
CA	207
CO	787
CT	4
DE	0
DC	17
FL	37
GA	45
HI	0
ID	10
IL	298
IN	47
IA	13,037
KS	1,508
KY	73
LA	32
MA	4
MD	29
ME	11
MI	64
MN	166
MO	589
MS	17
MT	32
NE	851,531
NH	0
NJ	43
NM	29
ND	64
NV	52
NY	83
OH	80
OK	60
OR	0
PA	52
RI	0
SC	14
SD	2,732
TN	61
TX	227
UT	12
VA	68
VT	12
WA	27
WV	0
WI	49
WY	468

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

There are a number of factors that influence in-and out-migration. Two common motives for workers to migrate from one state to another are (1) to receive education and (2) to pursue employment. Because maintaining an educated and skilled workforce is essential in building future economic growth, it is important to know how many of those who become educated in the state remain here after graduation to pursue employment.

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Figure 23. County of Employment for 2004 - 2005 Community College Graduates Working in Nebraska in First Quarter 2006



In 78 of Nebraska's 93 counties there was a least one person from this class working in the county. Lancaster County had the highest number of community college graduates working in any county with 592.

H. Based on an analysis of both the projected demand for skills and the available and projected labor pool, what skill gaps is the State experiencing today and what skill gaps are projected over the next decade?

Possible skill gaps for Nebraska workers can be identified by looking at future demand for occupations based on long-term projections and then comparing with current supply. Gaps in skills, abilities, and training received, in addition to shortages of licensed professionals may often be difficult to identify for a variety of reasons, some of which are listed below.

Location: The people trained or skilled in critical occupations may not be located in the right place to fill vacancies as they are available. Demands for specific skills may be in rural areas while the existing supply is located in an urban area.

Age: The workforce is an aging workforce, and the Baby Boom generation is within 5 years of retirement age (65). As reported in Figure 19, the surge in 60-74 year-olds combined with a decline in 40-54 year-olds may result in an especially challenging decade in addressing industry’s demand on Nebraska’s labor force.

Industry: Projected skills demand for an occupation may be spread across several industries.

Based on the occupations identified as ‘critical’ in Figure 16, the following gaps are anticipated by 2014:

Skills:

Basic Skills- developed capacities that facilitate learning or more rapid acquisition of knowledge.

Active Learning, Active Listening, Learning Strategies,
Mathematics, Monitoring, and Reading Comprehension

Complex Problem Solving Skills- developed capacities used to solve novel, ill-defined problems in complex, real-world settings.

Complex Problem Solving

Social Skills- developed capacities to work with people to achieve goals.
Instructing

Technical Skills-

Equipment Maintenance, Equipment Selection, Installation,
Programming, and Troubleshooting

Abilities:

Problem Sensitivity, Arm-Hand Steadiness, Deductive Reasoning,
Inductive Reasoning, Oral Comprehension, Oral Expression, Far Vision
(farsightedness), Multilimb Coordination, Near Vision (nearsightedness),
and Manual Dexterity

Work Activities:

Interacting with Computers, Troubleshooting, Repairing & Maintaining
Mechanical Equipment, Controlling Machines & Processes, Getting
Information, Assisting & Caring for Others, Making Decisions &
Solving Problems, Organizing & Prioritizing Work, Documenting &
Recording Information, Operating Vehicles or Equipment, Inspecting
Equipment or Material, Handling Moving Objects, and Establishing &
Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships

Licensure:

Out of the top 30 critical occupations found in Figure 16, 13 require
some form of license or certification for practice in Nebraska.

Current gaps that may be realized by the end of 2007 include:

Skills:

Basic Skills-Active Listening, Learning Strategies, Reading
Comprehension, and Speaking

Social Skills- Instructing

Technical Skills- Equipment Maintenance and Equipment Selection

Abilities:

Problem Sensitivity, Arm-Hand Steadiness, Deductive Reasoning,
Inductive Reasoning, Oral Comprehension, Oral Expression, Far Vision
(farsightedness), Multilimb Coordination, Near Vision (nearsightedness),
Manual Dexterity, Wrist-Finger Speed, Static Strength, Trunk Strength,

Work Activities:

Interacting with Computers, Getting Information, Assisting & Caring for
Others, Documenting & Recording Information, Operating Vehicles or
Equipment, Inspecting Equipment or Material, Handling Moving
Objects, Establishing & Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships,
Performing for or Working Directly with the Public, Performing General

Physical Activities, Communicating with Supervisors & Peers, and Performing Administrative Activities

Licensure:

Out of today's list of the top 30 critical occupations, 9 require some form of license or certification for practice in Nebraska.

I. Based on an analysis of the economy and the labor market, what workforce development issues has the State identified?

The workforce development issues that the state has identified center around the labor force, and economic development. It is crucial that Nebraska not only have a labor force of sufficient size to support existing industry growth, but also that the labor force has the necessary skills and knowledge to fill the positions created by economic expansion. Labor force availability is one of the first things both new and existing businesses look at before considering a change. The primary issue in Nebraska centers around a skilled labor force to meet the current and future needs of business. In addition, it is essential for the State to have the necessary economic development tools, including financial incentives, to not only attract new industry, but to promote retention and expansion of the existing businesses. LB 312 and LB 425 are recent legislative actions to encourage economic development in Nebraska.

J. What workforce development issues has the State prioritized as being most critical to its economic health and growth?

The issue that has been prioritized as being most critical to the economic health and growth is the retention, training and re-training of the existing labor force. Secondary to this issue is one of recruiting new workers to the State that already have the skills necessary to fill current positions and positions that will be created as we move into the next ten years.

To address the labor force issues, the State is working toward a standardized curriculum at the community college level, to insure that worker training and worker portability are connected. Education, Economic Development and Workforce Development are spearheading this effort.

The Department of Economic Development has targeted industry clusters suitable for expansion and development across the State. In the original report, industries were targeted based on existing synergies and a knowledge-based new economy. The existing synergies were: Agribusiness, including Food Processing and Alternative Fuels; Financial Services, where the State has success in Securities Brokerage Services, and Insurance; and Metal Products, including Fabricated Metal Products and Metal Stamping and Bending. Those industries included in the Knowledge Based, New Economy are: Biotechnology (Agribusiness), Electronics Manufacturing and Software Development. Those targets have been refined, and regionalized to allow for a more focused effort that is challenged by staff and time constraints. The targets that have been identified show projected growth in the State over the

next 10 years. Statewide, the targets are: Processed Food (14%), Transportation and Logistics (14%), and Information Services (10%). This targeted industry plan will be reviewed periodically and adjustment will be made to those industries that show the greatest promise.

The following is the results of a study completed by Deloitte & Touche Fantus in 2000 for the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. This study groups industry growth and development by region for the entire state.

Regional Clusters: The 2000 Deloitte & Touche Fantus study grouped Nebraska counties into four types: Rural, I-80, Industrial, and Metropolitan.

Target Industry Regions



Nebraska Department of Labor employment, establishment and payroll data was used to determine predominant employment clusters. Where possible the data was supplemented with Business Retention and Expansion Survey and U.S. Census data. Many suggested regional targets build from existing strengths. Others, however, are recommended as ways of leveraging existing strengths to diversify the economic base. Only regional stakeholders can choose their targets. The “suggestions” here are intended to help energize that process.

Central Sandhills Region

Background: The Central Sandhills Region is characterized by ranches and small service communities. The 2000 U.S. Census reported that these eight counties had a total population of 5,123. Accordingly, the region has few wage paying business establishments. Based on 2001 Department of Labor payroll information, the area has 162 establishments with payrolls and 792 payroll jobs; many of which work for ranches or feed lots. Some existing businesses may be able to expand their markets and add jobs,

and such a development strategy could be pursued. Other firms could be formed to further capitalize on the tourism potential of the area. Increasing business formations and attracting external expenditures are important components of this areas growth.

Possible growth opportunities include:

- Agricultural Processing Operations
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Metal Fabrication (agricultural markets)

North Central Region

Background: The North Central Region transitions from ranching to more intensive agricultural production. Its economy contains many elements of a resource-based ranch economy. While there are some Traded Clusters, about 75 percent of the region's economy comes from local trade and services. Some trade centers in the region have been able to diversify their economic base with manufacturing and traded services. With a regional population of about 30,000, there is labor available to attract and grow small firms. Additionally, the area has considerable tourism potential, with scenic areas and outdoor adventure opportunities. Near-term targets include:

- Metal Fabrication
- Information Services (including back-office operations)
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Bioscience/Technology

I-80 Corridor Region

Background: The 14 counties in this region have development assets and strengths not available to counties farther removed from major transportation corridors. Proximity to the traveling public, combined with significant ground transportation infrastructure, (road and rail) provides some competitive advantages for certain types of industry. Moreover, the region has several of Nebraska's largest non-metropolitan cities. The region's total population is 259,667 and the workforce exceeds 103,000.

In addition, this region has substantial investments in ethanol facilities. Currently five ethanol facilities are operating and two are under construction. The outputs from these facilities may represent an input resource for certain bioscience/technology firms. Other technologies use processed food outputs as an input-stream for production of pharmaceuticals. Given the existing clusters in the region, these present significant opportunities.

Possible targets include:

· Processed Foods · Heavy Machinery · Transportation & Logistics · Information Services (particularly associated with Transportation & Logistics and Manufacturing) · Bioscience and Medical Technology · Hospitality & Tourism · Health Services

Metropolitan Region

Background: A major portion of Nebraska's employment and population is concentrated in the nine counties included in the Metropolitan Region. With a population of 975,065,

this area contains 57 percent of the State's population, 53 percent of all private sector employers and 65 percent of the private sector workforce. The Metropolitan Region has three types of clusters: Natural Advantage, Historical and Investment-Driven. Examples of each type of cluster are:

1. Natural Advantage Clusters

- Processed Foods
- Transportation & Logistics
- Chemicals and Allied Products (Ethanol and Pharmaceuticals)

2. Historical Clusters

Insurance

Engineering and Management

Business Services (including data processing)

Heavy Machinery

Electronics (including Medical and Testing & Measuring Devices)

Defense

3. Investment -Driven Clusters

- Hospitality & Tourism
- Medical Research
- Health Services

Southwest Region

Background: The 11 southwestern private sector employment in the region is 9,705. The services sector accounts for 7,283 jobs (75%) of the region's private sector employment. Continue entrepreneurial development efforts in tourism, retail and information technology while capitalizing on front range proximity.

Possible targets include:

Agricultural Processing Operations

South Central Region

Background: These south central counties form a transition region, containing elements of the Southwest, I-80 and Metropolitan areas. These seven counties have a population of 51,022 and an economy with several Traded Clusters. Of the 14,870 private sector employees, 6,025 (40%) are in traditional manufacturing, and goods producing industries. Reviewing the composition of the number of establishments shows that of the 1,342 total private sector firms, 1,056 (79%) are in the service sector. There are several larger manufacturing employers in the area that represent a substantial employment base.

Possible targets include: ·

- Processed Foods
- Transportation & Logistics
- Plastics Manufacturing
- Information Services
- Hospitality & Tourism

Southeast Nebraska Region

Background: Geographic location to Omaha and Kansas City is a major advantage to this region. With relative accessibility to services of these larger areas, products and supplies are fairly accessible. Moreover, the Missouri River offers some of these communities opportunities to integrate truck, rail and barge transportation in moving goods.

Possible targets include:

- Processed Foods
- Plastics
- Bioscience/Technology
- Transportation & Logistics (establishing a Foreign Trade Zone)

Northeast Region

Background: Eighteen counties have been included in the Northeast Region. Parts of the region have concentrations of Traded Cluster industries. The production total is 204,993 with 29,498 (42%) goods producing employees and 40,824 (58%) service employees. Of the 5,382 private sector establishments, 4,083 (76%) are service sector firms. This indicates the contribution made by the larger employers in the area.

Possible targets include:

- Processed Food and Supply Chain
- Medical Devices
- Heavy machinery
- Bioscience/Technology (Including ethanol plant by product usage)
- Information Services
- Hospitality & Tourism

Sandhills Region

Background: Area included in the Sandhills Region consists of ranch and farm land, transit between cattle range and irrigated intensive agriculture. Of the 773 establishments with employees, 569 are local cluster businesses (73%). Employees are similarly distributed between Traded and Local clusters, with 3,769 of 5,140 employees being employed by Local Cluster establishments.

Possible targets include:

- Agricultural Processing Operations

Western Region

Background: For the purposes of targeting industries, there are eight counties combined into a region. With a population of 74,393, and its proximity to the front-range, the region has an opportunity to further develop businesses that can benefit from front-range markets. Nearly 80% of both establishments and employees are comprised of Local Cluster firms.

Possible targets include:

- Processed Foods
- Transportation & Logistics
- Information Services
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Heavy Machinery
- Health Services

V. Overarching State Strategies

- A. Identify how the State will use WIA Title I funds to leverage other Federal, State, local, and private resources in order to maximize the effectiveness of such resources and to expand the participation of business, employees, and individuals in the Statewide workforce investment system? (§112(b)(10).)**

The State will continue to participate and promote the following activities that leverage Title I WIA funds: Sponsor joint in-service training conferences with One Stop partners; participate in curriculum/training development for high-skill, high-demand jobs with our Education partners (example: Nebraska FutureForce and Nebraska Career Management System); host the Governor's Annual Workforce Development Summit that private business underwrites; provide the Worker Training Program for incumbent workers where business matched \$3.63 for every dollar contributed in PY05. Additionally, the State has consolidated the following federal resources: Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, WIA Title I, and Trade under a single entity – Office of Employment and Training. Future opportunities the State will pursue include expanding its current fee-for-service to employers.

- B. What strategies are in place to address the national strategic direction discussed in Part I of this guidance, the Governor's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the State's economy and labor market? (§§112(b)(4)(D) and 112(a).)**

When the State and Local Workforce Investment Boards met on March 16, 2005, they were asked to respond to the questions in Part I of this guidance. They recommended the following **strategies and solutions**:

- **Provide opportunity to more strongly partner with private sector partners/businesses to address some of the needs that exist, i.e., private personnel agencies;**
Action Step(s): 1) To continue joint projects through the Career Centers with Manpower and Advance Services Inc. (two of Nebraska's statewide private placement companies). 2) Local and State participation in the National Business Relations Group sponsored by DOL/ETA. [In 2006, a committee of the NWIB was formed to focus on meeting Goal #1: Increase partnerships and opportunities to meet the twenty-first century needs of our workforce customers (employers and labor force).]
- **Engage the services of an auditing group outside of the state agencies to identify duplication of effort, lower the cost, and improve effectiveness of the process;**
Action Step: The Executive Committee of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board will identify process and timeframe for conducting this evaluation project with a non-partial, outside entity. [This was accomplished in 2006.]
- **Engage the League of Municipalities and State Chambers of Commerce to make things happen through legislation;**
Action Step: The current Chair of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board, Mr. Gayle McClure, is past Chair of the statewide Nebraska Chamber of Commerce. He, along with the Executive Committee of the Nebraska Workforce

Investment Board will identify strategies and an implementation plan to promote workforce issues and solutions through these two organizations.

- **Prioritize marketing effort to employers;**

Action Step: The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board established an ad hoc Marketing Committee to coordinate State and local outreach efforts. The top priority for Messaging and Marketing was to the Nebraska employer community. During PY 05, the State utilized \$300,000 of PY 03 Federal Incentive Funds on a very successful Employer Marketing Campaign. It was recently decided to move forward with a second effort with the same contractor in order to place more ads created during the previous campaign. The outreach efforts shall be coordinated with the Local Areas.

- **Bring to the table more community-based leadership;**

Action Step: As different initiatives are explored, i.e., faith-based projects, Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program, incentives for demand-driven training and placement opportunities, etc., the State will continue to invite and engage local leaders and expertise in any one of these areas.

- **Establish a task force that includes Health and Human Services, the judicial system, and Education to help youth stay on track for graduation.**

Action Step: The State, through the state and local WIBs, will explore existing statewide Youth Advocacy Committees and/or taskforce to identify possible workforce development interface. In the event there is no established group that could benefit from integrating workforce and education issues for youth in their purpose, the State will work with State-level leadership from Health and Human Services, Corrections, Education, Probation, and Labor to identify a taskforce that would spearhead efforts to participate in initiatives that focus on youth offenders, youth timing out of foster care, etc.

C. Based on the State's economic and labor market analysis, what strategies has the State implemented or plans to implement to target industries and occupations within the State that are high growth, high demand, and vital to the State's economy? (§§112(a), 112(b)(4)(A).) The State may want to consider:

1. **Industries projected to add a substantial number of new jobs to the economy; or**
2. **Industries that have a significant impact on the overall economy; or**
3. **Industries that impact the growth of other industries; or**
4. **Industries that are being transformed by technology and innovation that require new skill sets for workers; or**
5. **Industries that new and emerging and are expected to grow.**

The State plans to: support economic development goals for attracting, retaining and growing business and industry within the State; support the Governor's vision for maximizing and leveraging Federal and State resources available for workforce investment; support the Governor's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce; and support the Governor's vision for bringing together key players in workforce development

to continuously identify the workforce challenges facing the State and assist in developing innovative strategies and solutions to address those challenges.

At the micro level, the State plans to continue to analyze data from the Current Employment Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, and the Occupational Employment Statistics programs. At the macro level, the State plans to continue to use the aforementioned program data to produce long and short term industry and occupation projections. In the area of education and training, FutureForce Nebraska, a consortium of State agencies, education entities, elected officials, and economic development professionals are involved in a program to enhance awareness, preparation, and training for students and adults in careers and industries targeted for growth by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. They are developing unified programs through Career Pathway committees in the areas of Health Sciences, Entrepreneurship, Industrial Manufacturing, Financial Services/Insurance, Biotechnology, Commercial Construction, Transportation, Warehousing, Distribution, and Logistics.

The micro and macro data will then be shared with the Governor, the Workforce Investment Boards, the Workforce Development partners, the Commission for Post-Secondary Education, the Governor's Economic Council, the University of Nebraska's Bureau of Business Research, Local Elected Officials and the economic development community to allow them to evaluate their economic development strategies such as: targeted industries; FutureForce Nebraska priorities; and higher education program development.

Nebraska plans to support state-based workforce information delivery systems and maintain common systems/web-based systems that support business growth and economic development and provide quality career guidance directly to students and job seekers and their counselors. Through those integrated databases of information the State plans to support efforts such as FutureForce Nebraska and standardized curriculum at the community colleges that will begin to prepare the workforce of tomorrow. Through those efforts and others like them, the State will work toward developing a qualified competitive workforce. Additionally the State plans to continue to provide information and support to the Workforce Investment Boards through direct contact, fund State workforce information training initiatives, provide an employer name and address list, develop occupational analysis products, and maintain administrative databases to provide labor market information that is easily accessible and can be used to evaluate the current economy and identify work force issues locally, regionally, and statewide.

- D. What strategies are in place to promote and develop ongoing and sustained strategic partnerships that include business and industry, economic development, the public workforce system, and education partners (K-12, community colleges, and others) for the purpose of continuously identifying workforce challenges and developing solutions to targeted industries' workforce challenges? (§112(b)(8).)**

FutureForce Nebraska – Nebraska Career Pathways is an educational, economic growth and business partnership initiative formed to:

- Increase awareness, provide information and link economic growth opportunities of Nebraska Career Pathways to parents, educators, employers, workforce constituents, labor organizations and community partners;
- Reduce the gaps between anticipated workforce demand and the supply of individuals with postsecondary education and training in targeted economic growth industries; and
- Evolve as a national leader in forging education and business partnerships.

Through this initiative, career ladders and pathway curriculums have been and shall continue to be developed for K-20 in targeted industries.

E. What State strategies are in place to ensure that sufficient system resources are being spent to support training of individuals in high growth/high demand industries? (§§112(b)(17)(A)(i) and 112(b)(4)(A).)

Nebraska uses workforce information and economic data to assess where the jobs are and will be in the future. The State encourages local areas to partner with local economic development agencies for two reasons:

- First, economic development agencies can help local areas identify and access emerging and high growth labor markets for their job seeker customers; and
- Second, based on that understanding of market needs, local area programs are able to help economic development agencies supply better prepared job seekers to meet the needs of expanding or relocating businesses. Local Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stop business services staff can stay abreast of emerging and high-growth industries and prepare job seekers for careers that have growth potential.

Strategies include:

1. Requiring Local Workforce Investment Boards to have “representatives of economic development agencies, including private sector economic developmental entities;”
2. Exploring use of local grants; and
3. Requiring in the “Local Plan Instructions” an analysis of local economic and labor market needs.

Two of the President’s Community-Based Job Training Grants have been awarded to community colleges in Nebraska to train workers in the skills required to succeed in high growth, high demand industries. Nebraska Workforce Development and the One Stop centers have partnered with many others in these efforts. Central Community College received a grant for \$1,910,185 to target the Transportation industry. Employer partners include: Werner Enterprises, Nebraska Machinery, Union Pacific Railroad, Wal-Mart Distribution Center, and Nebraska Trucking Association. Northeast Community College received a grant for \$1,999,999 and is targeting the Energy industry. Employer partners include: Siouxland Ethanol, Aquila, ADM Corn Processing, Fagen, Inc. and Nebraska Corn Board.

F. What workforce strategies does the State have to support the creation, sustainability, and growth of small businesses and support for the workforce needs of small businesses as part of the State’s economic strategy? (§§112(b)(4)(A) and 112(b)(17)(A)(i).)

Small and mid-size businesses are the primary business customers of Nebraska One-Stop centers. Many Workforce Investment Boards have representatives who are also members of the State or local Chambers of Commerce and provide input on the needs of small businesses. Although the local Workforce Investment Boards determine the specific business services in their areas, many small businesses with limited in-house Human Resource services rely on the One-Stop center to assist in the hiring process by finding candidates, screening resumes, and allowing the use of their facilities for interviewing. The One-Stop Center in Columbus, Nebraska through its “Let’s Grow Columbus Initiative” has provided employers and individuals with immigration and naturalization information. Employers, frustrated with web sites and complex federal forms, have found the help they needed.

G. How are the funds reserved for Statewide activities used to incent the entities that make up the State’s workforce system at the State and local levels to achieve the Governor’s vision and address the national strategic direction identified in Part I of this guidance? (§112(a).)

The funding reserved for Statewide activities gives the State the flexibility to encourage the development of projects that support both the Governor’s vision and the national strategic direction. Projects for youth and adults, i.e., alternative school RFPs, youth resource web site, the development of Pathways curriculum, and the Worker Training Program for incumbent workers are examples of state funding supporting the national and state priorities. Future activities the State plans to implement that may be supported by statewide funds include, but are not limited to, technology development and support that increases One Stop System partner participation, economic development initiatives (particularly in the rural area) that promote job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities, curriculum and training development with our Education partners, and marketing and messaging.

Future statewide projects that Nebraska plans to embark on during this Plan period include: local economic development grant initiative to Career Centers and economic development entities to create jobs and promote entrepreneurial activities, particularly in the rural area, implementing the Navigator System throughout the Career Centers to promote serving customers with disabilities and support the two customer career/job information initiatives: Nebraska FutureForce and Nebraska Career Information System. Additionally, based on available funding, the State will continue to support our incumbent worker program, Nebraska Worker Training Program.

H. Describe the State’s strategies to promote collaboration between the workforce system, education, human services, juvenile justice, and other systems to better serve youth that are most in need and have significant barriers to employment, and to successfully connect them to education and training opportunities that lead to successful employment. (§112(b)(18)(A).)

The State “Youth Program Design” policy requires: “Local boards must ensure appropriate links to entities that will foster the participation of eligible local area youth. Such links may include connections to:

- (a) local area justice and law enforcement officials;
- (b) local public housing authorities;
- (c) local education agencies;

- (d) Job Corps representatives; and
- (e) representatives of other area youth initiatives, including those that serve homeless youth and other public and private youth initiatives.

Local boards must ensure that the referral requirements in WIA sec.129(3) for youth who met the income eligibility criteria are met. This includes providing these youth with information regarding the full array of applicable or appropriate services available through the local board, providers found eligible by the board, or One-Stop partners; and referring these youth to appropriate training and educational programs that have the capacity to serve them either on a sequential or concurrent basis.

In order to meet the basic skills and training needs of eligible applicants who do not meet the enrollment requirements of a particular program or who cannot be served by the program, each eligible youth provider must ensure that these youth are referred:

- (a) for further assessment as necessary, and
- (b) to appropriate programs.

Local boards must ensure that parents, youth participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to youth programs are involved in both the design and implementation of its youth programs.”

I. Describe the State’s strategies to identify State laws, regulations, policies that impede successful achievement of workforce development goals and strategies to change or modify them. (§112(b)(2).)

The State makes a concerted effort to identify impediments to successful achievement of workforce goals and strategies by:

1. Providing opportunity for public comment on all State WIA policies before they become final. Policies posted on the www.dol.nebraska.gov [go into – Workforce Investment Act - Policies] website do not become final until 30 days after posting.
2. Local WIA Administrators meeting are held on a regular basis and attendees from both the Local and State levels bring forward agenda items. Issues that are troublesome to service delivery may be discussed at these meetings and have (in the past) brought about changes in policies.

J. Describe how the State will take advantage of the flexibility provisions in WIA for waivers and the option to obtain approval as a workflex State pursuant to §189(i) and §192.

- Recognizing the need for more flexibility, the Governor received an extension in PY07 and PY08 of the approved waiver for PY05 and PY06 to allow for the transfer of 100 percent between adult and dislocated workers funding streams. [Sec. 133(b)(4); 20 CFR 667.140] In PY09, the Governor received approval for a waiver [not applicable to Recovery Act funds] allowing transfer of funds up to 50 percent between adult and dislocated worker funding. The Governor is requesting an extension of the PY09 transfer of funds waiver through PY10.

- The Governor received a waiver to extend the period of “Initial Eligibility of Training Providers” through June 30, 2010. He requests an extension of this waiver through PY10. This waiver was originally approved to postpone the “Subsequent Eligibility of Training Providers” until July 1, 2007. The extension is needed to provide the broadest range of eligible training providers to enable individuals to make informed choices related to their training goals. [20 CFR 663.530]
- The Governor requested a waiver to provide intensive and training services to individuals impacted by Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) with existing WIA funds greater than 6 months prior to the date of dislocation. [Section 101(9) and Preamble to Regulations, Federal Register, August 11, 2000] This waiver was revised and approved for PY08 to permit the State to use a portion of local area formula allocation funds to provide incumbent worker training and other statewide employment and training activities. The Governor **decided not to request** this waiver **for PY09 or PY10**.
- The Governor requested (but did not receive) a waiver to allow for the option of providing Wagner-Peyser Act-funded services with either merit or non-merit staff employees. [20 CFR 652.215]
- In December, 2007, a waiver was requested to allow Nebraska to replace the WIA 17 performance measures with the Common Measures. [Sec. 136(b)(2) and (c)(1); 20 CFR 666.100 and 666.300.] This waiver was approved through June 30, 2009 **and then in June, 2009, this waiver’s approval was extended through June 30, 2010**. The Governor requests this waiver **again** be extended through June 30, 2011.

The State does not anticipate requesting work flex authority at this time.

VI. Major State Policies and Requirements

Describe major State policies and requirements that have been established to direct and support the development of a Statewide workforce investment system not described elsewhere in this Plan as outlined below. (§112(b)(2).)

A. What State policies and systems are in place or planned to support common data collection and reporting processes, information management, integrated service delivery, and performance management? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(B).)

The state [is implementing an integrated Management Information System \(MIS\)](#). In accordance with the State policy on “Nebraska’s One-Stop Delivery System,” all comprehensive and affiliate One-Stops are electronically connected with [this integrated application](#). The system basically collects the information required by the U.S. Department of Labor. However, it also tracks waiting times, customer service times, and some case management information beyond what is required by the Department of Labor depending on whether the partners want to share. The system will allow for continuous improvement through tracking service and wait times for the purpose of improving on these times.

[This system](#) is the host system that contains data from multiple system partners allowing integrated access to all authorized shared information. Data [gathered](#) from Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade, WIA Title I-B, and other programs allows participant information (employers, job seekers, etc.) to be easily cross-referenced between programs.

The [State Hosted Management Information System](#) is [also](#) the Workforce Investment Act Management Information System. It meets WIA Title I regulatory and reporting requirements for tracking WIA Title I participants [and](#) is able to draw local and unemployment insurance data into a format that will allow for federal reporting from a statewide perspective. The performance data identified in the Annual Report is provided through this system.

The State of Nebraska participates in the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS). This allows Nebraska to get credit for individuals who exit the program in Nebraska and find employment in partnering states. The State also participates in the FEDES pilot which allows Nebraska to get credit for individuals who exit the program in Nebraska and find employment in the military, USP, and federal employment.

State policies address several performance-related issues including: Attainment of a Degree or Certificate Performance Measure; Literacy and Numeracy Gains Performance Measure; Placement in Employment or Education; Program Exit; Out-of-School Youth; and Youth Goal Setting. Each year, a State Issuance transmits to local areas and other contractors the performance standards for the upcoming program year.

Data Validation procedures were implemented during PY 2003. The State “Data Validation” policy identifies the allowable source documentation.

Nebraska is [in the process of implementing new technology](#) that will replace the individual program reporting software and have the ability to report common measures from multiple programs with one system.

B. What State policies are in place that promote efficient use of administrative resources such as requiring more co-location and fewer affiliate sites in local One-Stop systems to eliminate duplicative facility and operational costs or to require a single administrative structure at the local level to support local boards and to be the fiscal agent for WIA funds to avoid duplicative administrative costs that could otherwise be used for service delivery and training? The State may include administrative cost controls, plans, reductions, and targets for reductions if it has established them. (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)

Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System policy requires that the "the design of the local area's One-Stop delivery system, including the number of comprehensive centers and the supplementary arrangements, must be described in the local plan and be consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding executed with the One-Stop partners." The policy states: "Services will be integrated, to the extent possible, which will ensure a seamless system of service delivery, enhancing access to all programs." In addition, it requires: "Programs and services will compliment each other rather than be duplicated." It also encourages "common areas for center staff...to eliminate duplication of equipment in providing services." In addition, it recommends "a single point of entry shared by all partners in the center."

C. What State policies are in place to promote universal access and consistency of service Statewide? (§112(b)(2).)

"Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery Policy" promotes universal access statewide by requiring the following:

1. Information and services should be provided in a manner that is appropriate for the needs of the community. It is expected that the One-Stop system will take into account the uniqueness of their customers, including languages spoken. [For further guidance, refer to State policy on "Limited English Proficiency Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination" posted on the www.dol.nebraska.gov (Workforce Investment Act) website.]
2. Centers must be organized to address the individual customer's needs and tailored to include labor market information, common intake and eligibility determination for workforce training and services, assessment of needs, continuous and centralized case management, individual referral to education and skill training, and supportive services.
3. Multiple methods are in place to provide information on accessing services not available on site.
4. Center staff will have the expertise and professionalism to be flexible with all customers that enter, through the center or electronically, in order to meet the local needs of both employers and customers.
5. The location and physical layout must be convenient and easily accessible for all customers. [Further guidance has been provided through the State policy on "Accessibility."]

D. What policies support a demand-driven approach, as described in Part I. "Demand-driven Workforce Investment System", to workforce development – such as training on the economy and labor market data for local Board and One-Stop Career Center staff? (§§ 112(b)(4) and 112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

The State Local Plan Instructions policy for PYs 2007 - 2010 states: "A special emphasis continues to be placed on identifying the workforce needs in high-growth, high-demand and economically critical industries." The instructions clarify that "the demand-driven system is seen within a regional economic development context now more than ever." According to the State Workforce Information Grant Plan, the most frequent requests of workforce information during PY05 were equally split between media, business, and private individuals. There were also limited requests from Schools/Colleges and Chambers of Commerce. Internet is used to deliver the majority of data and Labor Market Information (LMI). However, on-site workshops,

training, conferences and presentations are also held across the state on LMI. Nebraska's Core Products and Services Grant staff assist State and Local Workforce Investment Board members in reviewing projections to ensure understanding of the data. This training provides information on trends, needs and issues on a local, regional and statewide basis. In addition, there is a regional analyst position that travels the state meeting with One-Stop management and staffs about their LMI needs and explaining how to use LMI in their local areas. This analyst meets with local Chambers of Commerce, economic development committees, and businesses to determine the needs of local businesses and assist them in understanding the availability and use of labor market information.

E. What policies are in place to ensure that the resources available through the Federal and/or State apprenticeship programs and the Job Corps are fully integrated with the State's One-Stop delivery system? (§112)(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

A State policy on "Apprenticeship" was developed in coordination with the State Director for the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. This policy recognizes apprenticeship programs as an effective and time-honored way to build a skilled, knowledgeable and loyal workforce. In accordance with this policy, "entities that carry out programs under the National Apprenticeship Act must meet the requirements specified in WIA Section 122, the final implementing regulations, and the State 'Eligible Training Provider Policy' to be certified as an eligible provider to receive Workforce Investment Act adult and dislocated worker funds through Individual Training Accounts." Many apprenticeship programs have chosen to be certified as eligible providers. The [PYs 2007 - 2010 Local Plan Instructions](#) stated that the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's "Vision for 21st Century Apprenticeship (TEN 17-06)" is a useful resource and should be addressed as part of the Local Vision, Goals, and Priorities.

As a mandated partner, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) shall be developed and signed between the Local Workforce Investment Board, with the agreement of the Chief Elected Official, and Job Corps relating to the operation of the One-Stop delivery system in every local area represented by Job Corps. The MOU must describe: methods for referral; a description of core, intensive, and training services and how these services will be provided through the One Stop delivery system; funding arrangements for services and operating costs of the One Stop delivery system; and how access to the other activities and programs carried out under the partner's authorizing laws will be achieved.

Please note, in Nebraska the national contractor for Job Corps services has chosen not to co-locate in the Career Centers across the state except at the Grand Island and Lincoln One Stop Career Centers. However, we understand that DESi will no longer qualify as a Job Corps provider effective September 2007. When at the national level these contracts are negotiated, it would be helpful if the requirements included a clause for the contractor to participate in the local Career Centers.

VII. Integration of One-Stop Service Delivery

Describe the actions the State has taken to ensure an integrated One-Stop service delivery system Statewide. (§§112(b)(14) and 121).)

A. State policies and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of service delivery through One-Stop Centers such as development of minimum guidelines for operating comprehensive One-Stop Centers, competencies for One-Stop Career Center staff or development of a certification process for One-Stop Centers? (§112(b)(14).)

Recognizing the importance of allowing for the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act to occur through locally-driven systems, the State does not certify Nebraska's comprehensive and affiliate One-Stops. However, it does ensure minimum criteria are met and coordinates with the local Workforce Investment Board staff to monitor the legislative requirements. The State policy "Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System" (attached) addresses the required criteria for Nebraska's comprehensive full-service and affiliate one-stops. This policy, also, states that "the design of the local area's One-Stop delivery system, including the number of comprehensive centers and the supplementary arrangements, must be described in the local plan and be consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding executed with the One-Stop partners." Since the actual certification process is handled at the local level, the Local Plan Instructions require identification of the policy and procedures for certification of the local One-Stop system. The local plans including the certification process are reviewed by the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) and their recommendations are made prior to approval by the Governor. The NWIB provides oversight of the quality of the One-Stop service delivery system statewide and has conducted evaluation surveys.

B. What policies or guidance has the State issued to support maximum integration of service delivery through the One-Stop delivery system for both business customers and individual customers? (§112(b)(14).)

In Nebraska, all Wagner-Peyser "employment services" are provided at a One Stop Career Center location. The State policy "Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System" requires: "Services will be integrated, to the extent possible, which will ensure a seamless system of service delivery, enhancing access to all programs."

C. What actions has the State taken to promote identifying One-Stop infrastructure costs and developing models or strategies for local use that support integration? (§112(b)(14).)

The State has provided guidance in a State policy entitled "Cost Allocation and Resource Sharing for a One-Stop Delivery System." The State Workforce Investment Board set aside \$150,000 of PY02 Federal Incentive funds for infrastructure needs for local board certified One Stop Career Centers. In addition, the State has encouraged attendance of State and local staff at Regional workshops on this subject.

D. How does the State use the funds reserved for Statewide activities pursuant to §§129(b)(2)(B) and 134(a)(2)(B)(v) to assist in the establishment and operation of One-Stop delivery systems? (§112(b)(14).)

A portion of the State set-aside is reserved to assist in the establishment and operation of the One-Stop delivery system. Currently the State funds the support of the Individual Training Accounts/Eligible Training Provider System, the WIA Title I

Management Information System technology, participation in Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) and assistive technology (equipment in the Career Center resource rooms that assist customers with disabilities) all of which support the operation of the One Stop Delivery System. At the monthly Local WIA Administrators meetings, local areas are provided an opportunity to discuss their One Stop delivery system needs and it is at this time the local areas identify how additional statewide funds could be used. Additionally, in the past, Nebraska has been awarded Federal Incentive Funds for achieving performance. Of the \$2,935,622 received, \$835,622 has been, or will be, expended on establishing and enhancing Nebraska's One Stop delivery system. These funds have supported One Stop infrastructure needs (facility upgrades, ADA improvements, resource room equipment, conferencing equipment, etc.) and One Stop system building (staff training, consultant to work with State and local WIBs, messaging and branding efforts, etc.). Supporting the One Stop delivery system will continue to be a priority use of future Federal Incentive Funds.

E. How does the State ensure the full array of services and staff in the One-Stop delivery system support human capital solutions for businesses and individual customers broadly? (§112(b)(14).)

In Nebraska's demand-driven Workforce Investment System, all One-Stop services and staff support human capital solutions to workforce issues identified by business and industry. The One-Stop assets include multiple funding sources that serve diverse populations. In addition, the community brings to each One Stop the full spectrum of its resources. Every individual has access to a full array of One-Stop services.

VIII. Administration and Oversight of Local Workforce Investment System

A. Local Area Designations

- 1. Identify the State's designated local workforce investment areas and the date of the most recent area designation, including whether the State is currently re-designating local areas pursuant to the end of the subsequent designation period for areas designated in the previous State Plan. (§112(b)(5).)**

Nebraska has three local Workforce Investment Areas. In August of 1999 the areas originally received approval for temporary designation. In 2001, all of the areas received subsequent designation until June 30, 2005. On June 22, 2005, Governor Heineman approved requests for continued designation for all of the areas through June 30, 2007. All of the areas received continued designation for PY07 and PY08. However, the Greater Omaha approval was conditional and reviewed in PY08. The areas are: Greater Omaha (Tri County) serving Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties; Greater Lincoln serving Lancaster and Saunders Counties; and Greater Nebraska serving the remaining eighty-eight counties in Nebraska. These areas are identical in size and number with the Service Delivery Areas that operated successfully under JTPA. Subsequent [designations](#) of the areas for PY09 [were](#) approved [and requests are under consideration for PY10.](#)

- 2. Include a description of the process used to designate such areas. Describe how the State considered the extent to which such local areas are consistent with labor market areas: geographic areas served by local and intermediate education agencies, post-secondary education institutions and area vocational schools; and all other criteria identified in section 116(a)(1) in establishing area boundaries, to assure coordinated planning. Describe the State Board's role, including all recommendations made on local designation requests pursuant to section 116(a)(4). (§§112(b)(5) and 116(a)(1).)**

In July of 1999, the Governor proposed the temporary designation of the three Workforce Investment Areas (identified above in question 1) to the State board after receiving written requests for designation from the Chief Elected Officials of those areas. The board declined to recommend its approval until additional information could be gathered on the proposal. Accordingly, the Commissioner of Labor, acting as the Governor's Workforce Investment liaison, conducted public hearings in Grand Island on 8/9/99; in Lincoln on 8/10/99; and in Omaha on 8/11/99. The League of Nebraska Municipalities and the Nebraska Association of County Officials supplied mailing labels to over 950 elected officials to insure their opportunity for input. The public responded favorably to the Governor's proposal. On August 12, 1999, the Governor met with the Chief Elected Officials of Greater Omaha, Greater Lincoln, and Greater Nebraska and they again expressed their desire for designation. The Governor reiterated his intention to secure temporary designation for the three areas. The Governor also met with the president of Metropolitan Community College, the president of Southeast Community College, and the executive director of the Community College Association to hear their views and concerns. He asked them to take an active role at the local level to insure the state's success under the Act. On August 27, 1999, the State Board approved the Governor's proposal. Each investment area receiving temporary designation had performed successfully in each of the last two years as a Service Delivery Area under JTPA and had sustained the fiscal integrity of funds used to carryout its activities. Since the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 limited the time of temporary designation to no more than two years, it was necessary for the subsequent designation to occur prior to August 27, 2001. When the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) met on July 19, 2001, a motion unanimously passed to recommend to the Governor that the designation be

extended until the end of the period covered by the State plan (June 30, 2005) for each of the three areas. The Governor agreed. Requests for continued designation in PY05 and PY06 were sent to Governor Heineman by Mayor Seng for the Greater Lincoln Local Workforce Investment Area (WIA); Chief Elected Officials Board Chairperson Glawatz for the Greater Nebraska WIA; and Mayor Fahey for the Greater Omaha WIA. In May of 2005, the Compliance Committee recommended to the NWIB that the Governor extend the designations until the end of the period covered by the State plan (June 30, 2007) for each of the three local areas. However, the recommendation for the two-year designation for the Greater Omaha WIA was conditional with a review and approval by the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board in one year. The condition required that Greater Omaha not be sanctioned based on PY 04 performance and all fiscal integrity issues identified in this committee's review were officially resolved. Following a review by the Compliance Committee on March 3, 2006, a recommendation was made that the Greater Omaha area receive continued designation status for the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. When the NWIB Executive Committee met on June 6, 2006, they approved the recommendation. The Compliance Committee met on February 13, 2007, and considered requests for continued designation through June 30, 2009 from the three local areas. The Committee recommended the designation for all three areas be extended until the end of the period covered by the State plan (June 30, 2009). However, the recommendation for the two-year designation for the Greater Omaha area was conditional with a review in one year. The condition required that Greater Omaha not be sanctioned based on PY06 performance. On February 19, 2008, the Compliance Committee met to conduct the one-year review. Since the Greater Omaha area failed to meet performance levels in the Adult and Youth programs two years in a row (PY05 and PY06), the state had applied sanctions. The Greater Omaha (Tri County) board chair and contractors provided reports to the committee on corrective actions taking place. The Compliance Committee met on May 20, 2008, and recommended to the NWIB that the designation for the Greater Omaha Area be continued through June 30, 2009. At the June 13, 2008 NWIB Executive Committee meeting the motion was approved. At the February 24, 2009, Compliance Committee meeting the subsequent designation of the areas for PY 2009 was recommended. The NWIB at their March 13, 2009, motioned to recommend subsequent designation of the local areas for PY 2009. [The Governor agreed. The Compliance Committee met on February 23, 2010 and gave consideration to the requests by all three local areas for subsequent designation. The Committee's recommendation was presented at the NWIB Executive Committee meeting held on April 2, 2010.](#)

3. Describe the appeals process used by the State to hear appeals of local area designations referred to in §§112 (b)(5) and 116(a)(5).

A unit of general local government, including a combination of such units, that requests, but is not granted, designation of an area as a local area may submit an appeal to the state board by filing a written appeal in the office of the Commissioner of Labor within thirty days of the mailing of the notice that the appealing party was not granted designation as a local area. The appeal shall set forth all issues that are the basis for the appeal. The Commissioner of Labor shall conduct the appeal hearing on behalf of the state board. The hearing procedures shall be governed by the Administrative Procedure Act. The appealing party shall be notified of the decision of the state board within ninety days of the date the appeal is filed by having the decision mailed to the person designated for receipt of notices by the appealing party in its notice of appeal, certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the state board shall be final unless an appeal is filed with the United States Secretary of Labor within thirty days of the mailing of the decision of the state board to all interested parties. Appeals from the decision of the state board shall be made to the United States Secretary of Labor as required under §116(a)(5) of the Act. To date, there have been no appeals filed.

B. Local Workforce Investment Boards -- Identify the criteria the State has established to be used by the chief elected official(s) in the local areas for the appointment of local board members based on the requirements of section 117. (§§112(b)(6), 117(b).)

The State policy entitled “Criteria for Local Workforce Investment Boards” provides guidance on the requirements of section 117. It discusses: membership of the Local Board; composition of the Local Board; appointment, certification, and decertification of the Local Board; and the policy process for the Certification of the Local Board.

The policy states requirements of the Law including:

- Members of the board that represent organizations, agencies, or other entities shall be individuals with optimum policymaking authority within the organizations, agencies, or entities. [Sec. 117(b)(3)]
- A majority of the members of the local board shall be representatives of business in the local area. [Sec. 117(b)(4)]
- The local board shall elect a chairperson for the local board from among the representatives of business on the local board. [Sec. 117(b)(5)]

According to the policy, the membership of each board shall include:

- Representatives of business in the local area who are owners of businesses, chief executive or operating officers of businesses, and other business executives or employers with optimum policymaking or hiring authority. These persons are to represent businesses with employment opportunities that reflect the employment opportunities of the local area. They are to be appointed from among individuals nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations;
- Representatives of local educational entities, including representatives of local educational agencies, local school boards, entities providing adult education and literacy activities, and post-secondary educational institutions (including representatives of community colleges, where such entities exist), selected from among individuals nominated by regional or local educational agencies, institutions, or organizations representing such local educational entities;
- Representatives of labor organizations (for a local area in which employees are represented by labor organizations), nominated by local labor federations, or (for a local area in which no employees are represented by such organizations), other representatives of employees;
- Representatives of community-based organizations (including organizations representing individuals with disabilities and veterans, for a local area in which such organizations are present);
- Representatives of economic development agencies, including private sector economic developmental entities; and
- Representatives of each of the one-stop partners; and
- May include such other individuals or representatives of entities as the CEO in the local area may determine to be appropriate.

C. How will your State build the capacity of Local Boards to develop and manage high performing local workforce investment system? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(14).)

At a minimum, two and one half percent (2.5%) of the Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker funds set aside at the state level will be available for incentive awards, capacity building, and technical assistance. Nebraska will reserve 67% of this set-aside for incentive grants and 33% for capacity building and technical assistance.

The capacity building funds shall be used to provide capacity building efforts aimed at improving the competencies of Workforce Investment staff, board members, and the staff of other One Stop partners that provide service(s) to the One Stop customer. These capacity building efforts include out-of-state and in-state training conferences. Some of these training efforts include: annual spring conference for front-line field staff, performance training, management information training, data validation training, and subject matter training, i.e., case management, working with business partners, etc.

D. Local Planning Process -- Describe the State mandated requirements for local workforce areas' strategic planning. What assistance does the State provide to local areas to facilitate this process, (112(b)(2) and 20 CFR 661.350(a)(13).) including:

1. What oversight of the local planning process is provided, including receipt and review of plans and negotiation of performance agreements? and

The State provided Local Plan Instructions for [PYs 2007 - 2010](#) to the local areas in [January, 2010](#). These instructions provided a framework for the local workforce investment plan. In April of [2010](#), the local plans are to be forwarded to the Office of Employment and Training after 30 days of public comment. The Compliance Committee of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board shall meet on May [25, 2010](#), for their review. Their recommendations on the plans shall be forwarded to the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board for their review on June [18, 2010](#). [The NWIB](#) then makes their recommendation to the Governor prior to the July 1, [2010](#) program year start. As part of the plans, the locals describe the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and Chief Elected Official that will be used by the local WIB for measuring performance.

2. How does the local plan approval process ensure that local plans are consistent with State performance goals and State strategic direction?

According to the Local Plan Instructions for [PYs 2007 - 2010](#), "the vision, goals and priorities of the local plan must be consistent with the state plan and take into account and reflect on the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration's current policy emphasis and strategic priorities. Also, the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's New Strategic Vision for the Delivery of Youth Services (TEGL 28-05), their Vision for 21st Century Apprenticeship (TEN 17-06), [and their vision for implementing the Recovery Act \(TEGL 14-08\)](#) are useful resources and should be addressed."

E. Regional Planning (§§112(b)(2), 116(c).)

1. Describe any intra-State or inter-State regions and their corresponding performance measures.

Not applicable.

2. **Include a discussion of the purpose of these designations and the activities (such as regional planning, information sharing and/or coordination activities) that will occur to help improve performance. For example, regional planning efforts could result in the sharing of labor market information or in the coordination of transportation and support services across the boundaries of local areas.**

Not applicable.

3. **For inter-State regions (if applicable), describe the roles of the respective Governors and State and local Boards.**

Not applicable.

F. Allocation Formulas (112(b)(12).)

1. **If applicable, describe the methods and factors (including weights assigned to each factor) your State will use to distribute funds to local areas for the 30% discretionary formula adult employment and training funds and youth funds pursuant to §§128(b)(3)(B) and 133(b)(3)(B).**

Nebraska has chosen to use the standard allocation formulas for distributing the adult and youth funds. The 30% discretionary method shall not be a part of the process.

2. **Describe how the allocation methods and factors help ensure that funds are distributed equitably throughout the State and that there will be no significant shifts in funding levels to a local area on a year-to-year basis.**

In order to avoid shifts in funding levels to the local areas, the Governor shall implement the hold-harmless provision provided by the Secretary for the adult and youth funds.

3. **Describe the State's allocation formula for dislocated worker funds under §133(b)(2)(B).**

For within-state allocations of the dislocated worker funds, 10% will be set aside for Rapid Response activities, not more than 15% shall be reserved for statewide activities, and the remaining portion of funds will be distributed according to the factors identified in the following chart. The state Workforce Investment Board's Policy and Procedures Committee was originally responsible for the assignment of formula weights for dislocated worker funds. The committee had representatives from all three local areas in the state. The factors chosen were based on the required information as identified in Section 133(b)(2)(B) of the Act. Much discussion took place to balance the needs of dislocated workers in both the urban and rural areas. The dislocated workers (including farmers and ranchers) factor received the largest emphasis. It was important to the committee that the distribution of funds gave proper consideration to the number of workers impacted by the current agricultural economy. Multiple sources of data are used to capture the number of affected workers including: the dislocated worker unit's report on Rapid Response (plant closing and layoff numbers); Nebraska Department of Revenue farm income data; bankruptcy reports to give additional farmer/rancher data; and mass layoff statistics program report.

ALLOCATION FACTOR	WEIGHT ASSIGNED IN FORMULA	DATA SOURCE(S) AND TIME PERIOD
Relative average number of unemployed individuals who reside in the local area as compared to the total average number of unemployed individuals in the state.	10	Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009
Relative number of unemployed individuals who reside in areas of concentrated unemployment in each local area as compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in all such areas of concentrated unemployment in the state.	20	Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009
Relative number of individuals who have been unemployed for 15 weeks or more and who reside in the local area as compared to the total number of such individuals in state.	10	Unemployment Insurance Benefit Files July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009
Relative number of dislocated workers (including farmers and ranchers) in the local area as compared to the total number of such individuals in the state.	40	WARN/Rapid Response Report July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009, NE Dept. of Revenue, US District Bankruptcy Court, Mass Layoff Statistics Program
The reduction in the number of jobs within declining industries in a local area as compared to the number of jobs reduced within declining industries in the state.	20	Industry Projections 2006-2016, Mass Layoff Statistics Program, Rapid Response/WARN July 2008 through June 2009
	100.0	

4. Describe how the individuals and entities on the State board were involved in the development of the methods and factors, and how the State consulted with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining such distribution.

The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board's Policy and Procedures Committee was originally responsible for the development of the allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for adult, dislocated worker, and youth employment and training activities. Through a reorganization of the State Workforce Investment Board, the Compliance Committee assumed this responsibility. This committee has tracked the distribution of funds and related participation levels and has chosen to keep the same weighting of factors for the 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 program years. In the event of reauthorization, this committee shall review the allocation

language to see if changes need to be made to the formulas for the distribution of funds.

The recommendations from this committee were included in the draft state plan published on the Internet website. A special effort was made to solicit comments from the chief elected officials and local boards. In addition, opportunities for public comment were made available.

The full Workforce Investment Board made the final recommendation of the whole plan to the Governor.

G. Provider Selection Policies (§§112(b)(17)(A)(iii), 122, 134(d)(2)(F).)

1. Identify the policies and procedures, to be applied by local areas, for determining eligibility of local level training providers, how performance information will be used to determine continuing eligibility and the agency responsible for carrying out these activities.

The state has established and distributed on the Internet an Eligible Training Provider Policy.

There are two types of eligibility, initial and subsequent. They have slightly different qualifying procedures and will be discussed separately.

Initial Eligibility Requirements

Nebraska has established the following policies and procedures for determining the initial eligibility for training providers based on Section 122 of the Act:

Step 1

All institutions and public or private providers desiring to provide training services shall submit an application to the local board for the local area in which the provider intends to provide training services. This application is developed by the local board. These application forms can be accessed though the internet at NebraskaWorkforce.com. Applications can be completed and submitted online. The provider must submit this application in the timeframe and manner prescribed by the local board, ensuring that all necessary information is included. After the local board reviews the initial application, it will approve or disapprove it and forward the list of eligible providers and programs to the state.

STATE REVIEW NOT REQUIRED

According to Section 122 of WIA, a training provider that meets one of the following criteria are initially eligible without state agency review:

- A postsecondary educational institution that is able to receive federal funds under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and provides a program that leads to an associate degree, a baccalaureate degree, or certificate;

OR

- An entity that carries out programs under the National Apprenticeship Act.

This initial eligibility will be for a maximum of eighteen months.

REVIEW BY STATE REQUIRED

Other Public or Private Providers

- Other public or private providers of a program of training services may be included on the initial eligible provider list even though they do not meet the criteria described above. However, they have to follow the procedure for use by local boards to determine the eligibility of a provider to receive funds for a program of training services. Examples of providers that might be included in this category include community-based organizations and the local boards, if those local boards meet the waiver criteria for providing training. Programs of training services provided by postsecondary educational institutions that do not lead to an associate or baccalaureate degree or certificate and apprenticeship programs that are not registered under the National Apprenticeship Act must be determined for initial eligibility under these provisions. Customers may nominate to the local board providers, to be considered on the initial eligible provider list.

Step 2 – Performance Information [Required for Other Public or Private Providers]

Current Provider of Training Services

If the provider provides training services through a program on the date of application, they shall include performance information on the program.

There are seven measures for which providers must submit data and meet the standards. Three of the measures cover all individuals participating in the program and include:

1. Program completion rates for all individuals participating in the applicable program;
2. Percentage of all individuals participating in the applicable programs who obtain unsubsidized employment, which may also include information specifying the percentage of individuals who obtain unsubsidized employment in an occupation related to the program; and
3. Wages at placement in employment of all individuals participating in the applicable program; and

Four of the measures concern only customers who complete the training program and cover:

1. The percentage of applicants who have completed the applicable program and have been placed in unsubsidized employment;
2. The retention rates in unsubsidized employment of participants who have completed the applicable program 6 months after the first day of the employment involved; and
3. The wages received by participants who have completed the applicable program 6 months after the first day of the employment involved, and

4. The rates of licensure or certification, attainment of academic degrees or equivalents, or attainment of other measures of skills of the training participants who graduate from applicable programs.

Non-Current Provider of Training Services

If the provider does not provide training services on the date of the application, the provider must meet the appropriate requirements as specified in the state and local procedures.

The initial eligibility for approved Other Public or Private Providers will be for a maximum of eighteen months.

Step 3 – Cost Information [Required for All Providers] Each provider must submit information relating to the program costs (such as tuition and fees) for participants of each program.

Step 4 – Verification of Performance

After the state receives the local lists of eligible providers and programs, the designated state agency (the Nebraska Department of Labor) has thirty days to verify whether the provider meets the required performance levels as required by the state plan. A provider who is placed on the list for a program, and is not removed by the Nebraska Department of Labor, shall be considered to be an eligible provider of training services for the program. The state then compiles the lists from all the local areas and widely disseminates the list.

Subsequent Eligibility Requirements [Subject to change if approved waiver is extended for PY07, PY08, PY09 and PY10]

Nebraska has established the following policies and procedures for determining the subsequent eligibility for training providers based on Section 122 of the Act:

Step 1 [Required for All]

Training providers seeking subsequent eligibility shall submit the following performance information annually to the appropriate local board. They must also annually meet the required performance levels.

There are seven measures for which providers must submit data. Three of the measures cover all individuals participating in the program and include:

1. Program completion rates for all individuals participating in the applicable program;
2. Percentage of all individuals participating in the applicable programs who obtain unsubsidized employment, which may also include information specifying the percentage of individuals who obtain unsubsidized employment in an occupation related to the program; and
3. Wages at placement in employment of all individuals participating in the applicable program; and

Four of the measures concern only WIA customers who complete the training program and cover:

1. The percentage of participants who have completed the applicable program and have been placed in unsubsidized employment;
2. The retention rates in unsubsidized employment of participants who have completed the applicable program 6 months after the first day of the employment involved; and
3. The wages received by participants who have completed the applicable program 6 months after the first day of the employment involved, and
4. The rates of licensure or certification, attainment of academic degrees or equivalents, or attainment of other measures of skills of the training participants receiving funds authorized under Title I of WIA who graduate from applicable programs.

Additional Information—

The Governor and state board may annually require other verifiable program-specific performance information such as: retention rates in employment and the subsequent wages of all individuals who complete the applicable program; or where appropriate, the rates of licensure or certification of all individuals who complete the program; and the percentage of individuals who complete the program who attain industry-recognized occupational skills in the subject, occupation, or industry for which training is provided through the program, where applicable. The Governor or local board may require other verifiable program-specific performance information to obtain subsequent eligibility.

Assistance with information collection--

If gathering the additional information imposes extraordinary costs or if gathering the required information on training participants receiving funds authorized by Title I of WIA imposes extraordinary costs, the Governor or state board shall provide access to cost-effective methods for the collection of the required information; or the Governor shall provide additional resources to assist providers in the collection of the information, as appropriate. For instance, use of wage records with the assistance of the Nebraska Workforce Development - Department of Labor may assist in this process.

Step 2 – Cost Information [Required for All]

Each provider must submit information relating to the program costs (such as tuition and fees) for participants of each program.

Step 3 – Performance Verification [Required for All]

A provider who is retained on the list for a program and is not removed by the Nebraska Workforce Development - Department of Labor shall be considered to be an eligible provider of training services for the program.

Development of Procedures

Initial

As the initial procedures to determine eligibility as a provider were developed,

recommendations were sought from the local boards, local area staff, and providers of training services. Comments were also solicited from interested members of the public, including representatives of business and labor organizations.

Subsequent

The specific procedure for determining subsequent eligibility for postsecondary educational institutions that are able to receive federal funds under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and provide programs that lead to an associate degree, a baccalaureate degree, certificate, or employer-recognized competencies, or an entity that carries out programs under the National Apprenticeship Act will be determined by the Governor for use by local boards.

During the development of the procedures to determine subsequent eligibility as a provider, the Act spells out the need to receive recommendations from the local boards, local area staff, and providers of training services. Comments will also be solicited from interested members of the public, including representatives of business and labor organizations.

The state procedure will require local boards to consider several factors in making determinations of subsequent eligibility. These include specific economic, geographic, and demographic factors (including the characteristics of the populations) in the local areas in which providers seeking eligibility are located. The local boards should also take into account the difficulties in serving specific population groups.

The local board may require higher levels of performance than the levels referred to in the state procedures.

The Governor will make available the services of the Nebraska Department of Labor for the use of wage records in gathering information related to the eligible training provider provision under WIA where appropriate, as determined by the Commissioner of Labor, and not prohibited by state or federal law. Although the Governor will make available the services of the Nebraska Workforce Development - Department of Labor to assist local boards in accessing wage records information, local boards may obtain performance information from any reliable source as approved by the local WIB.

Exceptions to the Policy

Providers of customized training and on-the-job training will not be subject to the eligible provider requirements. The state will establish qualifying procedures to ensure a strong relationship between the eligible provider process and program performance. In general, performance information must be collected and the One-Stop operator in a local area will determine whether providers met the performance criteria, as the state procedures require. If a provider meets the performance criteria, it is considered eligible and will be

included on the list of eligible providers, with accompanying performance information.

Eligible Providers of Youth Activities

The local board for each area shall identify eligible providers of youth activities by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis, based on the recommendations of the youth council and on the criteria contained in the state plan.

Administration

The Governor has designated the Nebraska Workforce Development - Department of Labor as the agency responsible for carrying out the responsibilities associated with the selection of service providers for Individual Training Accounts. These responsibilities include making determinations on whether a provider has met its performance levels and carrying out enforcement measures. The Nebraska Department of Labor was chosen as an unbiased broker of information and services. This agency is responsible for the employment statistics that are used to help eligible providers gather performance information.

The Nebraska Workforce Development - Department of Labor is well positioned to provide access to the list of eligible providers and accompanying performance data. The NebraskaWorkforce.com website is a well-known site for career information. The Department regularly prints pamphlets and brochures and maintains mailing lists that include; libraries, schools, and organizations involved in Workforce Development.

Individual customers eligible to receive training services under Section 134(d)(4) of the WIA shall have the opportunity to select any of the "eligible providers," from any of the local Workforce Investment areas in Nebraska.

Nebraska may enter into reciprocal agreements to permit eligible providers to accept Individual Training Accounts provided in another state.

2. Describe how the State solicited recommendations from local boards and training providers and interested members of the public, including representatives of business and labor organizations, in the development of these policies and procedures.

The State "Eligible Training Provider Policy" was distributed through the NebraskaWorkforce.com website. The Greater Nebraska Workforce Investment Board reviewed the policy during the comment phase. There were no changes suggested by the Greater Nebraska WIB, or other local boards, or from the public during the comment period. However, a meeting was later held to discuss the provider policy and procedures to enhance the process. It was well attended with local representation. Good input was received. The decision was made to use a statewide application form that was accessible on the website. Additionally, meetings were held with Postsecondary Commission representatives, Community College representatives, and other providers to discuss the policy. Since the early

days of development, there have been several other discussions on this policy held at Local WIA Administrator meetings. As issues arise, they are brought to this forum for discussion.

3. Describe how the State will update and expand the State's eligible training provider list to ensure it has the most current list of providers to meet the training needs of customers?

The Eligible Training Provider list will be maintained by the Nebraska Workforce Development/Department of Labor. Applications may be submitted online at any time. The web site for applying is located at www.dol.nebraska.gov. The applications shall be forwarded to the appropriate WIB before each of their scheduled meetings. After WIB approval, the State will review the application and, if acceptable, will add the program to the Eligible Training Provider list. Updates will be available online as soon as the program is accepted. The list will be posted on the Nebraska Department of Labor website. The information shall be made widely available to participants in employment and training activities authorized under the WIA, and others through Workforce Development centers, DOL local offices, and partner agencies, schools, and libraries.

4. Describe the procedures the Governor has established for providers of training services to appeal a denial of eligibility by the local board or the designated State agency, a termination of eligibility or other action by the board or agency, or a denial of eligibility by a One-Stop operator. Such procedures must include the opportunity for a hearing and time limits to ensure prompt resolution.

There is an appeal process for providers denied eligibility to provide services, who are subsequently terminated from the state list of eligible providers, or who are denied eligibility by a One-Stop operator to provide on-the-job training or customized training. The training provider will:

- Submit a written request for a hearing within 30 days of denial notification to the state board. The state board will conduct a hearing within 30 days of receipt of the request for the hearing;
- The hearing shall include the reason(s) as to why the eligibility to provide training was terminated by the state and an appeal by the training provider as to why the decision should be reversed or a compromise established;
- Within 10 days of the hearing, a final judgment by the state board will be rendered. It will include the length of time, if any, the provider must remain ineligible to provide training services, and conditions that will justify reestablishing eligibility as a training provider.
- A decision under this state appeal process may not be appealed to the Secretary of Labor.
- Any parties aggrieved by a final decision may file a petition for review in the district court of the county where the action is taken within thirty days after service of the final decision.

5. Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the State level to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of

WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts. (§112(b)(16).)

All State level awards and grants (other than the 85% allocation to local areas) shall follow procurement requirements of the State of Nebraska provided that the procurements conform to applicable Federal law. The State of Nebraska, Department of Administrative Services, Materiel Division (DAS) is responsible for purchases of personal property. The Department provides manuals and guidelines for the agencies to follow in order to comply with the state law and regulation: LB 626 and Section 81-161.103 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes (direct market purchase authority). The DAS manual "Procedures for the Procurement of Contractual Services" describes the processes for developing contracts. All agencies are required to use a standardized, open and fair process for the selection of contractual services.

All contracts must include the grievance/protest policy in the specification package. The grievance/protest procedure shall include, at a minimum, these steps:

1. Within ten (10) calendar days after the intent to award decision is issued, grievances/protests are to be expressed in writing to the Executive Director. The letter should state the Service Contract Award (SCA) number and specific issues that are to be addressed.
2. A response shall be made by the Executive Director.
3. If the response from the Executive Director has not satisfied the grievance of the contractor, a meeting may be scheduled with the contractor and the agency to discuss the issues. (Optional)
4. A written response of the final decision by the Executive Director shall be sent to the contractor.

All State agencies including any State agency, board, or commission other than the University of Nebraska, the Nebraska State Colleges, the Legislature, Courts, and Constitutional officers are required to process and document all service contracts, no matter the dollar amount, through the procurement of services section of the Nebraska Information System (NIS).

As required by the State "Procurement Standards" policy (attached), it is the agency's responsibility to insure appropriate public notice is given on all requests for services proposals that are in excess of \$50,000. This includes the requirement that agencies submit the proposals to the Materiel Division to be placed on their web site at www.das.state.ne.us/materiel/purchasing. This site has a page on "doing business with the State of Nebraska" that provides information to vendors on how the State Purchasing Bureau does business.

6. Identify the criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria that the Governor and local boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities. (§112(b)(18)(B).)

The local Workforce Investment Boards shall identify eligible providers of youth activities by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis, based on the recommendations of the youth council.

The State will expect the local areas to include criteria that identify effective and ineffective youth activities when awarding grants. Such criteria will be determined by the local Workforce Investment Boards and youth councils and should include, but not be limited to:

- Success rates based on enrollments and completions;
- Provision of accommodations for special needs populations;
- Involvement of local employers, business, and community resources;
- Consideration of assessed needs;
- Attainment of employment and academic goals;
- Leading to credentials, diplomas, and equivalents;
- Improving educational and skill competencies;
- Ensuring youth of opportunities for positive adult mentoring experiences;
- Providing training opportunities to eligible youth;
- Strengthening leadership, youth developments, decision-making, citizenship, and community service.

The primary consideration in selecting agencies or organizations to deliver youth services shall be the effectiveness of the agency or organization in delivering comparable or related services based on demonstrated performance. This determination shall be in writing and take into consideration such matters as whether the organization has:

- The ability to meet the program design specifications at a reasonable cost, as well as the ability to meet performance goals;
- Adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain them;
- A satisfactory record of past performance (in job training, basic skills training, youth activities), including demonstrated quality of training; reasonable dropout rates from past programs;
- The ability to provide, or arrange for, appropriate supportive services as specified in the individual employment plan;
- The ability to provide services that can lead to the achievement of competency standards for participants with identified deficiencies;
- A satisfactory record of integrity, business ethics, and fiscal accountability;
- The necessary organization, experience, accounting, and operation controls; and
- The technical skills to perform the work.

H. One-Stop Policies (§112(D)(14).)

- 1. Describe how the services provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners will be coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system. Include how the State will consolidate Wagner-Peyser Act funds to avoid duplication of core services. (§112(b)(8)(A).)**

Each required and optional partner in Nebraska's One-Stop/Career Center delivery system will maximize coordination using the Common Intake System [contained in the State Management Information System](#) in Nebraska. This [MIS](#) is the key to streamlined service. Each partner, required or optional, is able to access the common database. Customers no longer need to repeat information to each partner as they progress through the tiers of service. No matter where in the

Workforce Development system the customer accesses services, all participating partners can view demographic, historical, and service provision information. Wagner-Peyser funds dedicated to the labor exchange serve as the heart and core of labor exchange. The Wagner-Peyser network is the most universally accessible and accessed service in the network of required and optional partners. Wagner-Peyser core services, statewide, are delivered through the Nebraska One Stop Career Center network. In Nebraska, streamlining of services and coordination is enhanced by sharing physical quarters in the One Stop Career Center environment. In these sites the close proximity of the partners, as well as monthly partner meetings will create the environment to further coordination. Since the legislation requires that each Workforce Investment Area has one physical One-Stop location, the state has supported leaving the decision as to the number of additional sites to the local area. The Greater Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (GNWIB) has 14 sites, which ensure the delivery of services across the entire 88 counties. The GNWIB addresses the One-Stop delivery system in three levels of certification: comprehensive, affiliate I, and affiliate II. Currently there is 1 comprehensive sites, 7 affiliate I sites, and 6 affiliate II sites in Greater Nebraska. The comprehensive Career Centers in Lincoln and Omaha ensure delivery of services in the two metropolitan areas of Nebraska. Together, there are 3 One Stop Career Centers, 1 in Lincoln and 2 in Omaha that provide services.

Elimination of duplication of service will be worked out in local planning and Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs). These documents will identify specifically how:

- Services will be organized in integrated, functional ways that best meet customer needs.
- Staff resources and equipment will be pooled in order to share functions such as reception, client assessment, and business outreach, marketing, and networking.
- To inform customer of choices and of services available, but also in how to access those services.
- Customer waiting time will be minimized.
- Staff will be trained to be knowledgeable of all services available and be able to provide basic information and initiate the services needed by the customer.
- Customers will be informed of and/or referred to other programs.

2. Describe how the State helps local areas identify areas needing improvement and how technical assistance will be provided.

The State helps local areas identify areas needing improvement by:

- a. reviewing performance on a quarterly basis;
- b. conducting data validation reviews;
- c. requiring corrective action when issues are discovered through on-site monitor reviews;
- d. tracking and reviewing expenditures;
- e. notifying local areas of information that is unacceptable to the Management Information System based on edit checks; and

- f. conducting surveys sponsored by the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board.

Technical assistance will be provided by:

- a. sponsoring statewide training sessions on areas that need improvement;
- b. funding local training efforts, as requested and as funding is available;
- c. bringing partners to Local WIA Administrators meeting to update on programs;
- d. drafting policy to clarify federal guidance;
- e. sharing written technical assistance papers;
- f. sponsoring attendance at national conferences, as funding is available; and
- g. participating on conference calls to discuss relevant issues.

3. Identify any additional State mandated One-Stop partners (such as TANF or Food Stamp Employment and Training) and how their programs and services are integrated into the One-Stop Career Centers.

Although not mandated, the Health and Human Services contracts with the Office of Workforce Security to provide the following TANF and Food Stamp services through the One Stop Career Centers:

- Statewide Workfare Program (for able-bodied Food Stamp recipient);
- Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (Douglas and Sarpy County);
- Employment First Program (TANF) in Central Region.

Health and Human Service staffs are co-located in many of the 17 Career Centers in the state.

Additionally, depending on location, the Career Centers across the state host a variety of partners including, but not limited to, the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development (state and local), Easter Seals, Goodwill, and Community Colleges.

I. Oversight/Monitoring Process -- Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the State utilizes to move the system toward the State's vision and achieve the goals identified above, such as the use of mystery shoppers, performance agreements. (§112(b)(14).)

The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board provides oversight of the One-Stop system by visiting local Career Centers, surveying local areas, using mystery shoppers to evaluate, and contracting for evaluative studies, as needed.

The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of General Counsel, monitors program and fiscal performance at the state and local area levels to ensure proper systems are not only in place, but that they are being followed and meet the requirements of the law on a yearly basis.

According to State policy, the State monitoring system must:

- Provide for annual on-site monitoring reviews of each local area to ensure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements required by WIA

Section 184(a)(4). These reviews include the appropriate administrative requirements for subrecipients and the applicable cost principles;

- Ensure that established policies to achieve program quality and outcomes meet the objectives of the Act and regulations, including the provision of services by One-Stop centers, eligible providers of training services, and eligible providers of youth activities;
- Enable the Governor to determine if subrecipients and contractors have demonstrated substantial compliance with WIA requirements;
- Enable the Governor to determine whether a local plan will be disapproved for failure to make acceptable progress in addressing deficiencies as required in WIA Section 118(d)(1); and
- Enable the Governor to ensure compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements of WIA section 188 and 29 CFR part 37.

J. Grievance Procedures. Attach a copy of the State’s grievance procedures for participants and other affected parties (including service providers.) (§§122(g) and 181(cc).)

The State’s policy on “Grievance or Complaints of a Non-Discriminatory Nature” is attached. It can also be accessed on the Internet at www.dol.nebraska.gov. [Go into Workforce Investment Act – Policies - Grievances or Complaints of a Non-Discriminatory Nature.]

K. Describe the following State policies or procedures that have been developed to facilitate effective local workforce investment systems (§§112(b)(17)(A) and 112(b)(2),):

1. State guidelines for the selection of One-Stop providers by local boards;
One-Stop Operator

The local board, with the agreement of the chief elected official(s), is authorized to designate or certify One-Stop operators and to terminate, for cause, the eligibility of such operators. This may be done through a competitive process, or in accordance with an agreement reached between the local board and a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes 3 or more of the One-Stop partners. The operator may also be a public or private entity, or consortium of entities of demonstrated effectiveness, located in the local area, which may include:

- A postsecondary educational institution.
- An Employment Service agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act I29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), on behalf of the local office of the agency.
- A private for-profit entity.
- A government agency.
- Another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization.

Exceptions would be elementary schools and secondary schools shall not be eligible for designation or certification as One-Stop delivery system has been established in a local area prior to the date of enactment of this Act. The local board, the chief elected official, and the Governor involved may agree to certify an entity carrying out activities through the system as a One-Stop operator for

purposes of Subsection (d), consistent with the requirements of Subsection (b), of the Memorandum of Understanding, and of Section 134.

One-Stop operators may be a single entity or a consortium of entities and may operate one or more One-Stop centers. In addition, there may be more than one One-Stop operator in a local area.

Operators are responsible for administering the One-Stop centers, and their role will be clarified through an agreement between the local workforce board and the chief elected official(s). This may range from simply coordinating service providers in the center, to being the primary provider of services at the center.

In areas where there is more than one comprehensive One-Stop center, there may be separate operators for each center or one operator for multiple centers. The operator may be selected by the local board through a competitive process, or the local board may designate a consortium that includes three or more required One-Stop partners as an operator. The local board itself may serve as a One-Stop operator, only with the consent of the chief elected official and the Governor (this would also apply to staff of the local board). The designation or certification must be made publicly, in accordance with the requirements of the "sunshine provision" in WIA Section 117(e), and must be reviewed whenever the biennial certification of the local board is made under 20 CFR663.300(a). [WIA Sec.117(f)(2)].

The operator will provide guidance to employees funded under the Wagner-Peyser Act in accordance with an agreed-upon MOU.

For on-the-job training and customized training providers, One-Stop operators in a local area must collect such performance information as the Governor may require, determine whether the providers meet such performance criteria as the Governor may require, and disseminate a list of providers that have met such criteria, along with the relevant performance information about them through the One-Stop delivery system. Providers determined to meet the criteria are considered to be identified as eligible providers of training services.

Local boards, in consultation with the One-Stop partners and other community service providers, must develop a policy on supportive services that insures resource and service coordination. Such policy should address procedures for referral to such services, including how such services will be funded when they are not otherwise available from other sources. Such policy must include whether or not needs related payments will be authorized and, if they are, establish the payment level for adults.

Local boards may establish limits on the provision of supportive services or provide the One-Stop operator with the authority to establish such limits, including a maximum amount of funding and maximum length of time for supportive services to be available to participants.

Procedures may also be established to allow One-Stop operators to grant exceptions to the limits established under the paragraph (a) of this section.

The costs of administration include the costs associated with performing the responsibilities of the state and local Workforce Investment Board and the chief elected officials, or board of chief elected officials required for the local public/private partnership. The specific responsibilities of these boards and officials include, but are not limited to, those identified in the sections of the Act dealing with Workforce Investment Boards and areas and One-Stop systems, [WIA Secs. 111(d), 116, 117(d),(e),&(h)(4), and 121(a)].

The portions of the costs of One-Stop operators which are associated with the performance of the administrative functions described in the previous paragraph are classified as administrative costs. Those portions of the costs of One-Stop operators, which are associated with the direct provision of Workforce Investment activities, are classified as program costs.

2. Procedures to resolve impasse situations at the local level in developing memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to ensure full participation of all required partners in the One-Stop delivery system;

The state has established a Memorandum of Understanding policy. According to this policy, any failure to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between a local board and a required partner must be reported by the local board and the required partner to the Governor or state board, and to the state agency responsible for administering the partner's program. The Governor or the state board and the responsible state agency will then report to the Secretary of Labor and to the head of any other federal agency with responsibility for oversight of a partner's program. If an impasse cannot be resolved and a partner fails to execute a Memorandum of Understanding, then that partner may not be permitted to serve on the local board. In addition, any local area in which a local board has failed to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with all of the required partners is not eligible for state incentive grants awarded for local coordination.

3. Criteria by which the State will determine if local Boards can run programs in-house;

In accordance with Sec. 117(f)(2) and 20 CFR 661.310, a Local Board (or their staff) may not directly provide core services, or intensive services, or be designated or certified as a One-Stop operator, unless agreed to by the chief elected official and the Governor. In addition (as addressed in the State policy on Procurement Standards) except under waiver authority, no Local Board (or their staff) may provide training services. However, local boards may submit a proposed request for a waiver of training prohibition to the Governor to become an eligible provider of training services. The local board's request must include:

- Satisfactory evidence that there is an insufficient number of eligible providers of such training services to meet the demand in the local area;
- Information demonstrating that the board meets the requirements as an eligible provider of training services;
- And information demonstrating that the program of training services prepares participants for an occupation that is in demand in the local area.

The local board must also make the proposed request available to eligible providers of training services and other interested members of the public for a public comment period of not less than 30 days. The local board must then submit the request with the information and evidence listed above, as well as information from the public comments received. Local boards may apply for a waiver that does not exceed one year in length. It may be renewed for additional periods not to exceed one year if they again follow the procedures listed above.

The waiver may be revoked if the State determines that the local board involved has engaged in a pattern of inappropriate referrals to training services operated by the local board.

4. Performance information that on-the-job training and customized training providers must provide;

Pre-award reviews or employer evaluations prior to contract execution are essential. Service deliverers shall determine if the employer/training provider is qualified and capable of entering into an agreement to provide on-the-job or customized training. Some examples of questions that need to be asked or information that needs to be identified are as follows:

- Is the employer a new or established business?
- Has the applicant worked for the employer at any time in the past, and if so, what were the dates and circumstances?
- What have been the hiring practices of this employer in general, and for this position in particular?
- Is the applicant related to the employer or any person who works for the employer in an administrative or supervisory capacity?
- What has been the employee turnover for this employer and this particular position (contracting with employers who have high employee turnover rates should be avoided)?
- Has the employer incurred any layoffs in the past 12 months?
- Is the position full- or part-time, and is it permanent, temporary, or seasonal?
- Is the position covered by a collective bargaining agreement, and if so, is the training consistent with such agreement?
- Have there been any OSHA, wage and hour, or child labor law violations in the past year?
- Are there minimum qualifications for the position, and is there a written job description?
- Are the pay and benefits equivalent to similar positions in the local labor market and/or similar positions with the employer?
- Does the employer provide worker's compensation or accident insurance?
- Is the employer's accounting system (especially payroll), personnel system, grievance system, etc., adequate to administer the contract agreement?
- Is the employer presently disbarred or suspended from receiving federal contracts?
- What share of the employer's workforce is enrolled in on-the-job training

contracts? (The ratio of on-the-job training positions to overall employees should not be too high, traditionally not in excess of one out of four.)

- Recontracting is allowable with the same employer and certainly desirable when an employer/training provider has a high success rate of training and placement. Some performance issues to consider before recontracting are: 6-month employment retention rate (at least 70% recommended); rate of successful completion of on-the-job/customized training; average wage of OJT/customized training recipients; decrease in wages after training; trainee dismissal after training or during follow-up review; recent layoffs; trainee grievances; displacement of current employees by WIA trainees; employee relocations to utilize WIA trainees.

In larger, more formalized training contracts, it is appropriate to discuss the availability and qualifications of the trainer. Contracts shall not be established for positions that do not or cannot have a trainer or supervisor present, or for temporary positions that are supplied to employers by temporary employment contractors.

5. Reallocation policies;

The state has established the following policy to identify, recapture, and reallocate funds pursuant to Sections 128(c) and 133(c) of the Act.

Deobligation

Local area grantees shall face deobligation of Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth funds and/or Adult Discretionary Allocations when they have failed to expend all funds within the two years allowed for expenditure. Local area grantees may face deobligation of Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth funds and/or Adult Discretionary Allocations when the State faces deobligation and reallocation for exceeding the Secretary's twenty-percent (20%) limitation. Funds deobligated shall be reallocated to other eligible local area grantees who have an acceptable expenditure rate and who are prepared to expand their program. In making reallocations to eligible local areas, the Governor shall allocate to each local area within the state an amount based on the relative amount allocated to such local area under the initial allocation. If no local area grantees have an acceptable expenditure rate or when other eligible local area grantees are not prepared to expand their program, then these funds may be used for Statewide projects.

Reallotment

In the event the state is required to make funds available for reallocation by the Secretary, the funds will be reallocated from grantees and the Governor's reserve funds as follows: The amount available for reallocation shall be equal to the amount by which the unobligated balance of an individual grantee's program year allotment at the end of the program year exceeds the Secretary's twenty percent (20%) limitation.

6. State policies for approving local requests for authority to transfer funds (not to exceed 20%) between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams at the local level;

Based on appropriation language, the transfer of funds for PY03, PY04, and PY05 was allowed up to a maximum of 30 percent. The Governor requested and received an extension for PY07 and PY08 of the approved waiver for PY05 and PY06 to allow for the transfer of 100 percent between adult and dislocated workers funding streams. In PY09, the Governor received approval for a waiver [not applicable to Recovery Act funds] allowing transfer of funds up to 50 percent between adult and dislocated worker funding. In order to ensure all population groups were served, the State required that all transfer requests be limited to 25% per quarter not to exceed 50% with justification of need provided. The Governor is requesting an extension of the PY09 transfer of funds waiver through PY10.

7. **Policies related to displaced homemakers, nontraditional training for low-income individuals, older workers, low-income individuals, disabled individuals and others with multiple barriers to employment and training;** Since funding is generally limited, under the "Eligibility for Adult Programs" policy and included in the "Local Plan Instructions" policy, locals are asked to identify their priority system for providing adult and youth services. The Adult and Youth Eligibility policies both provide that when the family of a disabled individual does not meet the income eligibility criteria, the disabled individual is to be considered a low-income individual if the individual's own income: meets the income criteria; or meets the income eligibility criteria for cash payments under any federal, state or local public assistance program.

The State ensures nondiscrimination and equal opportunity through issuance of policies, required assurances in state and local plans, monitoring, and by developing and implementing a Methods of Administration.

A State policy on the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) clarifies that the Older Americans Act Amendments "authorize Local Workforce Investment Boards to make the decision to deem SCSEP participants automatically eligible for intensive and training services."

The State Monitor Advocate oversees the Wagner-Peyser program outreach and will regularly evaluate its performance to insure that the required equity ratio indicators are being met or exceeded.

8. **If you did not delegate this responsibility to local boards, provide your State's definition regarding the sixth youth eligibility criterion at section 101(13)(C)(iv) ("an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment"). (§§ 112(b)(18)(A) and 20 CFR 664.210.)** Definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding the "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment" criterion shall be established at the local level. However, the policy must be included in the local plan.

IX. Service Delivery

Describe the approaches the State will use to provide direction and support to local Boards and the One-Stop Career Center delivery system on the strategic priorities to guide investments, structure business engagement, and inform service delivery approaches for all customers. (§112(b)(17)(A).) Activities could include:

A. **One-Stop Service Delivery Strategies: (§§112(b)(2) and 111(d)(2).)**

1. How will the services provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners be coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system? (§112(b)(8)(A).)

Each required and optional partner in Nebraska's One Stop/Workforce Development System will maximize coordination and the delivery of service through one of the following mechanisms: [the State Hosted Management Information System](#) or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). The [State Hosted MIS](#) providing common intake and case management is available to the One Stop Career Center partners (required and optional). [The State Hosted MIS](#) is the key to streamlined service. As One Stop partners participate in using this tool, customers will no longer need to repeat information to each partner as they progress through the tiers of service. No matter where in the Workforce Development System the customer accesses service, each of the participating One Stop partners can view real time demographic, historical, and service provision information. Memorandums of Understanding are another common way the coordination and delivery of partner services is established. Local area Workforce Investment Boards have made it a practice to outline how services will be provided as a part of the MOU with local One Stop partners.

Additionally, in many One Stop Career Center sites across the state, streamlining of services and coordination in delivering all partner services has been enhanced by sharing physical quarters. In these sites, the collocation of partners has created the environment to further coordinate. Collocation by partners has led to the forming of partner councils who meet regularly to address One Stop customer and facility issues, identify and host joint staff training, and determine the sharing of staff in the resource room and reception/welcome area of the One Stop Career Center. Since the legislation requires that each Workforce Investment Area have one physical One Stop location, the State has supported leaving the decision as to the number of additional sites and partner participation at these sites up to the local area Workforce Investment Board. The local Workforce Investment Boards, through either policy or procedure, have established service criteria.

2. How are youth formula programs funded under §128(b)(2)(A) integrated in the One-Stop system?

The chief elected official, as the local grant recipient for the youth program, is a required One-Stop partner and is subject to the requirements that apply to such partners. In addition, connections between the youth program and the One-Stop system will include those that facilitate:

- a. The coordination and provision of youth activities;
- b. Linkages to the job market and employers;

- c. Access for eligible youth to the local youth program information and services; and
- d. Other activities designed to achieve the purposes of the youth program and youth activities.

Local boards have the flexibility to offer services to area youth who are not eligible under the youth program through the One-Stop centers. However, One-Stop services for non-eligible youth must be funded by programs that are authorized to provide services to such youth. For example, basic labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act may be provided to any youth.

3. What minimum service delivery requirements does the State mandate in a comprehensive One-Stop Center or an affiliate site?

The **comprehensive full-service site** will have at a minimum the following elements:

- a. Services are available from mandated partners Monday through Friday (minimum of 40 hours per week). The applicable core services may be made available by the provision of appropriate technology at the comprehensive One-Stop center, by collocating personnel at the center, cross-training of staff, or through a cost reimbursement or other agreement between service providers at the comprehensive One-Stop center and the partner, as described in the MOU. It is preferred and recommended that every effort possible be made toward the direction of collocation for the service to be delivered directly. Unless the service is conducted by telephone or Internet, then the service must be provided in such manner at the comprehensive site.
- b. Because universality is one of the key principles of both the One-Stop concept and the Workforce Investment Act, it is necessary to address. The reason for its importance is because of the need to ensure all individuals have access to the system regardless of their background or current status.
 - Information and services should be provided in a manner that is appropriate for the needs of the community. It is expected that the One-Stop system will take into account the uniqueness of their customers, including languages spoken.
 - Centers must be organized to address the individual customer's needs and tailored to include labor market information, common intake and eligibility determination for workforce training and services, assessment of needs, continuous and centralized case management, individual referral to education and skill training, and supportive services.
 - Multiple methods are in place to provide information on accessing services not available on site.
 - Center staff will have the expertise and professionalism to be flexible with all customers that enter, through the center or electronically, in order to meet the local needs of both employers and customers.
 - The location and physical layout must be convenient and easily accessible for all customers.
- c. Common intake, case management, and tracking system available at a single point of entry.
- d. Services will be integrated to the extent possible, which will ensure a seamless system of service delivery, enhancing access to all programs.
- e. Programs and services will compliment each other rather than be duplicated.
- f. Core services shall be provided to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the One-Stop delivery system.
- g. Resource Room which provides the following:
 - Self-help modules
 - Tutorials
 - Locally-developed labor market Information and employment opportunities
 - Self-assessment/career decision-making information
 - Software

- Books
 - Videos
 - Staff expertise
 - Workshops
- Job Search/interviewing information
- Software
- Books
- Videos
- Staff expertise
- Workshops
 - Career exploration
- General occupation
- High tech occupations
- Business occupations
- Environment occupations
- Health occupations
- Job seeking skills workshops
 - Directories/general reference
 - School/educational Information
- College guides
- High school/GED information
 - Other/miscellaneous
- Newspapers
- Business and trade magazines
- Self-directed interest, skills, and personality assessments – both paper/pencil and computerized versions
- Career exploration and job search videos
- Telephones, fax machines, copiers
- Personal computers
- Word processing services
- Employer listings
- Temporary employment opportunities
- Full Internet connection
 - Consumer reports
 - One-Stop performance information
 - Complaint and grievance procedures
 - Surveys are made available for customers to complete for feedback
 - Initial assessments
 - Eligibility determination
 - Outreach and intake (job and career fairs)
 - Initial assessment of skill levels
 - Job search and placement assistance
 - Employment statistics
 - Follow-up services
- h. Intensive services shall be provided to adults and dislocated workers, and at

the discretion of the local Workforce Investment Boards, may be provided to disadvantaged and out-of-school youth who also qualify as adults respectively-

- Who are unemployed and are unable to obtain employment through core services; and
 - Who have been determined by a One-Stop operator to be in need of more intensive services in order to obtain employment; or
 - Who are employed, but who are determined by a One-Stop operator to be in need of such intensive services in order to obtain or retain employment that allows for self-sufficiency.
- i. Training Services as referenced in Section 134(d)(4) shall be provided to adults and dislocated workers, respectively-
- Who have met the eligibility requirements for intensive services under paragraph (3)(A) and who are unable to obtain or retain employment through such services;
 - Who, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and case management, have been determined by a One-Stop operator or One-Stop partner, as appropriate, to be in need of training services and to have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services;
 - Who select programs of training services that are directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area involved, or in another area in which the adults or dislocated workers receiving such services are willing to relocate;
 - Who are determined eligible in accordance with the priority system.

Qualification Requirement.-Except as provided in Reimbursement clause (below), provision of such training services shall be limited to individuals who-

- Are unable to obtain other grant assistance for such services, including federal Pell Grants established under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.); or
- Require assistance beyond the assistance made available under other grant assistance programs, to pay the costs of such training, including federal Pell Grants. Program operators and training providers must consider the availability of Pell Grants and other sources of financial training assistance and must coordinate available funds to pay for training and avoid duplication of payments.

Reimbursement Clause.-Training services may be provided to an individual who otherwise meets the requirements of this paragraph while an application for a federal Pell Grant is pending. If the Pell Grant is subsequently awarded, the training provider must reimburse the program operator the WIA training funds in the amount that the Pell Grant covers. The individual may retain that portion of the Pell Grant budgeted for education-related expenses.

Provider Qualification.-Training services shall be provided through providers identified in accordance with the Eligible Training Provider Policy.

Training Services - Training services may include-

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- On-the-job training;
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instructions, which may include cooperative education programs;
- Training programs operated by the private sector;
- Skill upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Job readiness training;
- Adult education and literacy activities;
- English as a Second Language; and
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

Affiliate Site

One-Stop partners have an obligation to ensure that core services are appropriate for their particular populations and are made available at either one of the network sites or at the comprehensive One-Stop center. An individual may still obtain certain services at the network site along with information about how and where to get all the other services provided through the One-Stop system.

The **affiliate site** will have at a minimum the following elements:

- a. Provide one or more of the programs, services, and activities at each site;
- b. A network of One-Stop partners through which the partners provide services linked to an affiliated site and through which all individuals are provided information on the availability of core services in the local area.
- c. This site should be electronically connected to the full-service comprehensive center, in order to connect to the common intake and case management system, consumer report, and labor market information.

Specialized centers or sites may be established or connected electronically in order to address the unique needs of dislocated workers and Nebraska's special populations.

4. What tools and products has the State developed to support service delivery in all One-Stop Centers Statewide?

As part of the Case Management process, the State encourages local areas to utilize "The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Nebraska" data prepared for the Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest. This is a valuable tool for assisting Nebraskans seeking to transition to self-sufficiency.

The State in coordination with partners has provided curriculum on "Pathways to Success: Nebraska Work Readiness Curriculum" and "Pathways to Success: Nebraska's Occupational Skills."

The [State Hosted Management Information System](#) is available to all partners in the One Stop System. [This MIS](#) provides a case management function, an electronic referral function, a single point of entry into the system function, and a reporting function.

Another program supported by the State that has been successfully implemented in some One-Stops in Nebraska is the Money Smart financial education program created by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The Money Smart curriculum helps individuals build financial knowledge, develop financial confidence, and use banking services efficiently.

- 5. What models/templates/approaches does the State recommend and/or mandate for service delivery in the One-Stop Centers? For example, do all One-Stop Centers have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers? Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every One-Stop Center? Are all One-Stop Centers required to have a resource center that is open to anyone?**

In Nebraska, the Wagner-Peyser, Veterans and WIA are delivered in a highly integrated manner. Often times staff are cross trained and cost shared to provide these services. Most recently the State has implemented a Business Service Model, which will standardize the process and services provided to employers. The model is currently practiced in Scottsbluff, Lincoln, and Omaha. By the end of 2007, the model will be implemented statewide. In 2006 and 2007 the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board utilized Federal Incentive funds to provide a consistent statewide message to promote and educate private sector employers on Nebraska's One Stop delivery system and the services available.

All comprehensive One-Stop Centers must meet the minimum service delivery requirements identified in #3 above including Resource Centers providing the services specified to all customers.

- B. Workforce Information – A fundamental component of a demand-driven workforce investment system is the integration and application of the best available State and local workforce information including, but not limited to, economic data, labor market information, census data, private sources of workforce information produced by trade associations and others, educational data, job vacancy surveys, transactional data from job boards, and information obtained directly from businesses. (§§111(d)(8), 112(b)(1), and 134(d)(2)(E).)**

- 1. Describe how the State will integrate workforce information into its planning and decision making at the State and local level, including State and local Boards, One-Stop operations, and case manager guidance.**

The Office of Employment and Training serves as staff support to the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) and its committees. In March 2006, the NWIB held a strategic planning retreat and subsequently established four Key Result Area (KRA) Goals and assigned members to serve on KRA Goal Committees. KRA Goals were updated in PY08. Progress reports are provided to the NWIB through standing and KRA committees. The subcommittee chair will include this when reporting to the NWIB. Labor market presentations are available to Nebraska's three local Workforce Investment Boards updating them with new industry/employment trends or data releases.

2. Describe the approach the State will use to disseminate accurate and timely workforce information to businesses, job seekers, and employment counselors, in easy to use formats that are readily accessible within One-Stop Career Centers and at remote locations such as libraries, schools, worksites, and at home.

The broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to the business community, individuals, the state's workforce development system and the state's One-Stop service delivery system will be in a three-pronged approach.

- The Office of the Commissioner delivers the majority of their labor market data and information through the Nebraska [Department of Labor](#) website.
- The Office of the Commissioner facilitates workshops, training, conferences and presentations across the state. The Commissioner's staff present to the local Workforce Investment Boards, Career Center staff, economic developers, employers and the public. This allows the State and Local Workforce Investment Boards to identify trends, needs and issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.
- A regional analyst approach is used to develop and deliver labor market information to One-Stop management and staff. This analyst also meets with local Chambers of Commerce, economic development committees, and businesses to provide labor market information products and services as needed.

3. Describe how the State's Workforce Information Core Products and Services Plan is aligned with the WIA State Plan to ensure that the investments in core products and services support the State's overall strategic direction for workforce investment.

The strategies identified by the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) to address the needs of labor market demand will allow the Board to align itself with employers' present and future needs for a work-ready labor force. Staff from Nebraska's Office of the Commissioner present to the NWIB and its committees and administer the Core Products and Services Grant. Therefore, NWIB committee meeting discussions have direct links to Workforce Information grant staff to identify relevant data regarding workforce development trends and issues.

The Office of the Commissioner provides staff support to the Local Workforce Investment Boards in developing their strategic plan by providing local economic data. Office of the Commissioner staff members give presentations at WIB meetings and participate in local board subcommittees, when requested. The participation of business and community leaders on the Workforce Investment Boards enables the Office of the Commissioner staff to request and receive input from them through the various processes noted above.

Office of the Commissioner staff track requests for information. This tracking system identifies the types of requestors (i.e. business owner, economic developer, job seeker, etc.), what's being requested (data, contact information, product listings, etc.), how much staff time was required to complete a request,

and what product or service can be identified. Staff uses the database of requestors as a mailing list for customer satisfaction surveys and gathers customer feedback through presentation evaluations. These evaluations determine the needs of the business community, job-seekers, and workforce development professionals.

The Office of the Commissioner provides labor market information to support the goals and strategic direction identified earlier in this plan in the following manner:

Nebraska's Vision

Our vision for the years ahead must be about preparing Nebraska to compete in the 21st Century, in an age of technological marvels, new educational challenges, international competition and entrepreneurial opportunity.

The Governor's Vision is expressed in four goals:

1. **Maintain** a dynamic, demand-driven workforce development system focusing on Nebraska's high-growth, high-demand industries within a regional development context;
2. **Increase** the integration of services to employers and job seekers by multiple public and private partners;
3. Recognize the need to meet the changing long and short-term needs of businesses and individuals with a coordinated, efficient, and less bureaucratic delivery system; and
4. Provide the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning, and living.

Goal 1: **Maintain a dynamic, demand-driven workforce development system focusing on Nebraska's high-growth, high-demand industries within a regional development context;**

Data is provided in methods appropriate to both the customer type and with awareness that customers have unique needs.

- Internet self-service tools are regularly updated with industry and occupation employment and trends, occupation wages, numbers and percent of unemployed individuals, graduate employment outcomes, and other career resources.
- Publications, including print and electronic newsletters, are produced to present changing conditions (such as industry employment change), introduce new products or services, explain products in detail (such as differences in graduate earnings between different programs of study), and inform readers how to obtain additional assistance.
- Custom reports are produced to provide products or services in the format requested, to give more detail or explanation, or to add value to core products and services. For example, custom groupings of industries were created based on location-quotient analysis of their respective employment and used to report occupation employment, wage and expected job growth.

- Survey research and special studies are conducted to provide products such as turnover rates, duration of job vacancies, industry worker age and gender characteristics, and availability of benefits to Nebraska workers. The results of these studies are disseminated on the Internet, in print and through presentations to the public.
- Trainings and presentations are conducted to ensure that customers know what products and services are available, how to obtain them, how to request additional information, and to provide customer feedback.

Goal 2: [Increase](#) the integration of services to employers and job seekers by multiple public and private partners;

The Office of the Commissioner partners with a number of public and private entities to create and disseminate value-added products and services. Some of the specific products and services created as a result of partnerships are listed below.

Administrative databases from Nebraska [Department of Labor](#) and the Department of Motor Vehicles are linked to provide demographic data (i.e. age, race, income, etc.) for Nebraska's workforce not available from any other source. A similar partnership with the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education provides details on employment outcomes for Nebraska community and state colleges. Both of these partnerships help to create data that facilitates services focused on the future needs of the state's workforce.

The Office of the Commissioner partners with the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Offutt Air Force Base and others to provide training on career and job search resources. These sessions focus on job assistance resources such as wage and benefits information, occupational projections, training and licensing resources, and assistance with using the Nebraska [Department of Labor](#) web site. The trainings and presentations provided allow partner agencies to better serve business and jobseeker customers.

Location-specific industry employment data, commuting patterns, wage estimates, employee benefits, and other data are provided to state and local economic developers, Chambers of Commerce, and business associations. The Office of the Commissioner provides these types of economic development data online and through custom reports to assist economic development agencies to serve their business customers. In addition, the One-Stop Career Center offices provide employer and job seeker customers easy access to the Office of the Commissioner's products and services including wages, skill information, and training. Products and services from partner agencies are also available at a single location.

Occupation and industry wage estimations and projections, unemployment rates, mass layoff statistics, labor force counts, hours and earnings estimates by industry, and licensing requirements for occupations are provided by staff to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other national partners. The federal-state

cooperative programs allow all customers nationwide to compare Nebraska's data to other states and the nation.

The Office of the Commissioner will continue to develop and expand partnerships with both public and private entities. The integration will allow customers to efficiently and effectively receive services from [the Nebraska Department of Labor](#) and its partners.

Goal 3: Recognize the need to meet the changing long and short-term needs of businesses and individuals with a coordinated, efficient, and less bureaucratic delivery system;

The Office of the Commissioner identifies customer's needs through customer satisfaction surveys, feedback from conferences/presentations and by analysis of information collected from data requestors. The Office of the Commissioner responds to meet the needs of customers through training, custom reports, conferences/presentations, publications and Internet resources. The Office of the Commissioner partners with the University of Nebraska's Bureau of Business Research on industry employment projections and provides the Bureau of Economic Analysis with data for industry cluster analysis in support of meeting business needs. Regular meetings are held with various state government agencies including Health and Human Services and Economic Development. Meetings are held with local Workforce Investment Boards to discuss current issues and assess their needs.

Both long- and short-term industrial employment projections and long term occupational projections are compiled for Nebraska Department of Labor customers. Projections are regularly updated and posted on the Agency website for easy access. Wages are provided on over 400 occupations for the two Metropolitan Statistical Areas and seven regions throughout the state. The Office of the Commissioner also uses the Estimates Delivery System which allows wages to be updated each quarter. The Office of the Commissioner has a dedicated contact person to help businesses, partner agencies and other customers with questions regarding the Nebraska workforce.

Goal 4: Provide the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning, and living.

The Office of the Commissioner supports the goal of “providing the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning, and living” through presentations at schools and colleges which help youth/adults to plan their careers. In addition, the Office of the Commissioner provides Internet accessible web-based applications to provide information on training opportunities, fastest growing, highest paying occupations, occupations with most openings and other career information to guide youth/adults to make career decision.

The web portal “Nebraska Explorer” maintained by the Office of the Commissioner contains information which helps youth/adults to create resumes, improve letter writing skills and prepare for job interviews. This site also assists Future Force Nebraska customers to make sound career decisions. It also provides links to other career resources such as moving and salary calculators which help to estimate cost of living and relocation information in the United States.

The Internet comprehensive resource “Nebraska TrainingLink” provides information on education and training programs available for youth/adults in Nebraska. It gives information on training programs such as length of training, type of degree earned, training location, training provider contacts, program cost and recent graduate earnings.

Another easy-to-use online tool “Career Compass” maintained by Office of the Commissioner provides information to our future workforce on fastest growing occupations, occupations with most job openings, highest paying occupations and training, experience and education required for these occupations. This site provides the above information by region in Nebraska which helps the youth/adults to look for the opportunities where they are interested to live.

Staff from the Office of the Commissioner participate in job and career fairs. Information such as wages, occupational trends, career resources and self-evaluation tools and website resources are presented during these events.

All the online resources mentioned above are available at www.dol.nebraska.gov.

4. Describe how State workforce information products and tools are coordinated with the national electronic workforce information tools including America's Career Information Network and Career Voyages.

The projects and programs identified below all work together to provide information for the various audiences served at the local and national level.

The Office of the Commissioner currently provides labor market information to the individuals in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Nebraska sixteen times per year. Content highlights O*NET Online, America's Career InfoNet, Nebraska-specific information and information tools plus other useful sites (a cost of living calculator, finding LMI in other states, etc.).

After receiving confirmation of student confidentiality law compliance, graduate employment and earnings information is again being collected. This information is matched with Unemployment Insurance wage files for all community and state colleges, one University campus, as well as for a number of private, postsecondary career schools. This information includes numbers and percentages of graduates remaining in Nebraska, estimated annual earnings, industry employment by major and degree, employment by gender, age, race, and maps of work locations. Workforce Investment Board members are able to utilize this information on labor supply and other policy issues in their local areas. The information is also supplied back to the colleges in aggregated form with accompanying maps. Information from this source is supplied in the Workforce Investment Act Eligible Training Providers list TrainingLink (on the LMI website). A publication is also produced and will be published on the web by July 2007.

Nebraska provides information about occupations that require licensure or certification/regulation for use in the Licensed Occupations Information System (LOIS), which supports America's Career Kit and America's Learning Exchange. It is the intent of the Labor Market Information Center Staff to have all Licensed Occupation Information in place by April 1 of each calendar year. Nebraska integrated the occupation videos produced by the New Jersey Department of Labor into a CD of the Nebraska licensed occupations.

Nebraska continues to work with six other states to develop job turnover data by industry, age, gender, and location from wage records. The information from this research will be shared with the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and Career Centers to assist individuals to understand more about the labor market. We are able to identify high turnover industries, the best scenarios for job retention, and identify wage levels that have high turnover. This data will provide for better business decisions not only for the WIBs, and Career Centers, but it will also provide valuable information to Unemployment Insurance staff, economic developers, and regional planners.

C. Adults and Dislocated Workers

1. Core Services. §112(b)(17)(a)(i).

a. Describe State strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services as described in §134(d)(2).

State policies ensure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services in the following manner:

- i. Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System policy (attached) on P. 3 discusses universality under elements of a comprehensive One-Stop center, on P. 6 it lists the minimum core services (also addressed below), and on P. 11 it discusses the minimum elements of an affiliate site.
- ii. Accessibility policy (attached) was issued to ensure that the programs, services, and facilities of each One-Stop delivery system are accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities.

The State has established a Limited English Proficiency Plan (attached) which provides that individuals with Limited English proficiency are able to access programs and services provided by the One Stop Career Centers and One Stop partners on an equitable basis.

The State policy "Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System" requires that all comprehensive One-Stop centers provide core services to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the One-Stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include:

- i. Determinations of whether the individuals are eligible to receive assistance under this subtitle;
- ii. Outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the One-Stop delivery system;
- iii. Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs;
- iv. Job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling;
- v. Provision of employment statistics information, including the provisions of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
- vi. Job vacancy listings in such labor market areas;
- vii. Information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs described in clause (I); and
- viii. Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skill requirements for such occupations; and
- ix. Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services as described in Section 122, provided by program, and eligible providers of youth activities described in Section 123, providers of adult education described in Title II, providers of postsecondary vocational education activities and vocational education activities available to school dropouts under the

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), and providers of vocational rehabilitation program activities described in Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);

- x. Provision of information regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance measures and the One-Stop delivery system in the local area;
- xi. Provision of accurate information relating to the availability of supportive services, including childcare and transportation available in the local area, and referral to such services, as appropriate;
- xii. Provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
- xiii. Assistance in establishing eligibility for-
- xiv. Welfare-to-Work activities authorized under Section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (as added by Section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997) available in the local area; and
- xv. Programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under this Act and are available in the local area; and
- xvi. Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace for participants in Workforce Investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

On an annual basis, State Monitors review to be sure there is universal access to all of these core services.

b. Describe how the State will ensure the three-tiered service delivery strategy for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers authorized by the Wagner-Peyser Act includes: (1) self-service, (2) facilitated self-help service, and (3) staff-assisted service, and is accessible and available to all customers at the local level.

In accordance with the Act, job seekers and employer customers have a choice of three-tiered labor exchange services at all One Stop Career Centers (self help, facilitated self-help and staff-assisted). WIA Section 134(c) allows for arrangements to supplement the One Stop Career Centers with affiliate sites to support universal access of these services to the customers. In accordance with the Nebraska One-Stop Delivery System policy (attached), all Comprehensive Nebraska One Stop Career Centers and their affiliates offer the three-tiered service delivery strategy to both employers and job seekers, providing a range of services based on individual need, access at any location and are normally available from Monday through Friday (minimum of 40 hours per week). All of the One Stop Career Centers are provided state technical assistance to ensure compliance. The centers are customer-driven, allowing the job seeker and employer customers to select services appropriate to their individual needs and interests. The centers are also organized to address the individual customer's needs and tailored to include local, statewide and national labor market information, common intake and eligibility determination for workforce training and service, assessment of needs, continuous and centralized case management, individual referral to education and skill training, and other supportive services. All sites are electronically connected with [the State](#)

[Hosted Management Information System](#) in order to connect to the common intake, case management system, consumer report, and Nebraska Explorer LMI information. Additionally, in order to ensure and allow for customer choice all Career Centers are equipped with the following:

- Full functioning resource area is available to allow customers (job seekers and employers) to be self-sufficient in their employment and training search. Individuals, who are primarily seeking information (self-service) and do not need direct, one-on-one assistance, do not need to be registered or have direct contact with Career Center staff. Job Seekers can and do access information and procedures for applying for unemployment insurance, job openings, labor market information, information regarding resumes, interviews, local supportive services, training information and other Career Center/Partner activities unique to that Career Center location.
- A business customer area is made available to accommodate the unique needs of business clients. This space includes hard copy or computer access for applicant search, LMI information or access, labor law information and other unique program information the One-Stop negotiates with the employer community. In addition, conference rooms/areas are available for interviewing, group orientations, meetings, testing, and or assessments.
- Access to [the State Hosted Management Information System](#) website via the resource room. This website can be accessed twenty four hours a day, seven days a week by clients and employers who have access to a computer. For those without worksite or home Internet access, public use computers are available in all Career Center resource areas.
- Job seeker self-help customers may register to review jobs and enter a resume. No discussions with Wagner-Peyser funded staff ever need occur. Job application, interview appointment, and résumé submission can, and do, occur with the job seeker managing his/her service.
- Employer self-help customers can register and list a job opening directly on the website and/or search through résumés to locate qualified workers. Aside from electronic verification of the employer's federal employment identification number, employers do not need to interact with any Wagner-Peyser staff person to obtain these labor exchange services.
- Job seeker facilitated self-help occurs when the job seeker enters an office and sits at a computer in the Career Center resource area. There the job seeker receives help from Career Center staff as needed to search the database for jobs of interest, entering a résumé in the MIS, preparing a paper résumé for dissemination, or exploring job career options on the Nebraska Career Information System (NCIS), Career Compass, Career Scope, ONET assessments and others.
- Facilitated self-help for Employer customers occurs when employers lacking Internet connection at their home or employment site enter an office to use the Career Center resource area. Here the employer can enter a job order directly, research current labor market information,

receive guidance or updates on current labor laws and/or search for résumés of qualified workers with the assistance of One Stop career center staff.

- Job Seeker staff-assisted service occurs at the seeker's request for personalized individual service or as deemed appropriate by Career Center staff, Unemployment Insurance, or other case management protocol. Trained employment staff, workforce coordinators, and reemployment specialists provide assessments, referral to supportive services and up-to-date labor market information. Special efforts are made to take into account the uniqueness of customers, including languages spoken.
- Employers who participate in staff-assisted services receive the complete array of labor exchange service by contacting a staff person who will fulfill the request, be it putting a job order on the website, delivering a fee-for-service request, searching for qualified workers, contacting job seekers regarding current openings, providing up-to-date labor market and employment and training information.

c. Describe how the State will integrate resources provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner programs, to deliver core services.

At the State level, all Wagner-Peyser/Veterans and the WIA Title I administrative entities for the Greater Nebraska and Greater Omaha local areas are housed under the Office of Employment and Training. The policy of the Office of Employment and Training is that resources for these partners are only delivered through the One Stop Career Center delivery system, which insures full integration of resources. Since the intent of WIA is to establish a locally driven system, the extent to which required One Stop partners deliver core services and at what level varies at each One Stop Career Center. The mechanism utilized to establish and define the delivery of core services and fiscal integration by all required partners is the locally negotiated Memorandums of Understanding. MOUs with mandated One Stop partner programs are a requirement under the local planning process. Examples of how One Stop partner programs share resources to deliver core services include: staff in the resource room and reception/welcome area, equipment, training resources, and assessment tools.

2. Intensive Services. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

Describe State strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers who meet the criteria in §134(d)(3)(A) receive intensive services as defined.

The State policy “Nebraska’s One-Stop Delivery System” states that all comprehensive One-Stop centers provide intensive services to adults, dislocated workers, and at the discretion of the local Workforce Investment Boards, may be provided to disadvantaged and out-of-school youth who also qualify as adults respectively:

- Who are unemployed and are unable to obtain employment through core services; and
- Who have been determined by a One-Stop operator to be in need of more intensive services in order to obtain employment; or
- Who are employed, but who are determined by a One-Stop operator to be in need of such intensive services in order to obtain or retain employment that allows for self-sufficiency. Note: Local boards must set the criteria for determining whether employment leads to self-sufficiency and identify the criteria in their local plans. At a minimum, such criteria must provide that self-sufficiency means employment that pays at least the adjusted lower living standard income level determined annually by the Secretary based on the most recent lower living family budget issued by the Secretary. Self-sufficiency for a dislocated worker may be defined in relation to a percentage of the layoff wage.

Such intensive services may include the following:

- a. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include-
 - Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
 - In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
- b. Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.
- c. Group counseling.
- d. Individual counseling and career planning.
- e. Case management for participants seeking training services.
- f. Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.

3. Training Services. (§112(b)(17)(A)(i).)

- a. **Describe the Governor's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources.**

In order to allow for increased training in Nebraska, the Nebraska Worker Training program accesses and leverages multiple training funds including Statewide WIA set-aside funds, interest accounts, and employer matching funds. In PY05, \$1,476,128 in Worker Training Program grants were awarded. These funds were matched with \$5,361,151 in employer funds. These grants benefited 1,015 Nebraska businesses with approximately 18,000 incumbent workers receiving training.

Nebraska Workforce Development has also leveraged Federal funds for the support of the Navigator System in Nebraska. Following the Work Incentive Grant of 2003, Nebraska applied for and secured an additional \$467,451 Disability Program Navigator Project funds available through June, 2008. These funds were used to educate One Stop staff, network and promote system change for services provided to job seekers with disabilities.

b. **Individual Training Accounts:**

- i. **What policy direction has the State provided for ITAs?** The State has provided direction through a policy on "Individual Training Accounts" posted on the www.dol.nebraska.gov website. It provides for limited exceptions to the use of Individual Training Accounts. Individual Training Accounts are the primary method for the payment of occupational skills training leading to a degree, certification, or employer recognized skill certification under WIA. Contracts for services may be used instead of ITAs only when one of the following three exceptions apply:
 - When the services provided are on-the-job training (OJT) or customized training.
 - When the local WIB determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible providers in the local area. The local plan must describe the

process to be used in selecting the providers under a contract for services. This process must include a public comments period for interested providers of at least thirty (30) days.

- When the local WIB determines that there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the area by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve special participant populations (as defined below), that face multiple barriers to employment. The WIB must develop criteria to be used in determining demonstrated effectiveness, particularly as it applies to the Special Participant Population to be served. The criteria may include, but are not limited to:
 - financial stability of the organization;
 - demonstrated performance in measures appropriate to the program including program completion rate, attainment of the skills, certificates or degrees the program is designed to provide; placement after training in unsubsidized employment and retention in employment;
 - The relevance of the specific program to the workforce investment needs identified in the local plan.

The term "Special Participant Population that faces multiple barriers to employment" means a population of low-income individuals that is included in one or more of the following categories: (1) individuals with substantial language or cultural barriers; (2) offenders; (3) homeless individuals; and (4) other hard-to-serve populations as defined by the Governor.

Exceptions are intended to meet special needs and should be used infrequently. Those training providers operating under the ITA exceptions still must qualify as eligible providers.

ii. Describe innovative training strategies used by the State to fill skills gaps. Include in the discussion the State's effort to leverage additional resources to maximize the use of ITAs through partnerships with business, education (in particular, community and technical colleges), economic development agencies, and industry associations and how business and industry involvement is used to drive this strategy.

Through partnerships with business, education, economic development, and industry associations, Nebraska is able to discover where there are skill gaps. FutureForce Nebraska is one of the innovative training strategies established in recognition of the need for a workforce prepared to fill the jobs of the future. Working with postsecondary education institutions, the FutureForce Nebraska partners are developing career pathways that help students visualize opportunities here in Nebraska. The Nebraska Worker Training program is another strategy. This program allows employers access to funds to train incumbent workers in needed skills. This program has representatives of organized labor, industry, community college association, State Education, Economic Development,

and Labor representatives, and a representative of the public reviewing training projects and awarding funds.

iii. Discuss the State’s plan for committing all or part of WIA Title I funds to training opportunities in high-growth, high-demand and economically vital occupations.

The State “Local Plan Instructions” require each local plan to include a signed assurance that “WIA training shall be provided only for those occupations for which there is a demand in the area served, or in another area to which the customer, is willing to relocate.”

iv. Describe the State’s policy for limiting ITAs (e.g., dollar amount or duration)

The dollar amount of the ITA will be determined by each local board. The local boards will base their decision using criteria such as the cost of the program, cost of training support items (books, equipment, etc.), and resources of the individual. The Local Plan Instructions require all of the locals to describe the Individual Training Account policy to be used in the local area. As part of that policy, they must include information such as dollar limits, durations, etc.

For Trade petitions certified after September 17, 2001, it is the policy of the Nebraska Department of Labor that the maximum amount of funds expended for training costs for eligible training participants under Trade/NAFTA-TAA programs to not exceed \$12,000 per eligible participant. However, exceptions to the limitation may be considered when the training requested is available at a reasonable cost and particularly suitable for the individual situation as demonstrated by back-up documentation provided by the local area. The final decision for either approval or disapproval of an exception is determined by the Nebraska Commissioner of Labor. For purposes of this policy, the cost of allowable travel, relocation, and job search assistance available under 20 CFR Part 617 shall not be applied towards the maximum training costs allowed under this policy.

v. Describe the State’s current or planned use of WIA Title I funds for the provision of training through apprenticeship.

Employers in high growth industries recognize the value of using the apprenticeship concept to develop a skilled, knowledgeable workforce. The State supports the use of the U.S. registered apprenticeship system to meet Nebraska’s Workforce Investment System strategic priorities. The State “Apprenticeship” policy was written to assist locals in determining strategies that would benefit their participants and contribute to meeting their performance goals.

vi. Identify State policies developed in response to changes to WIA regulations that permit the use of WIA Title I financial assistance to employ or train participants in religious activities when the assistance is provided indirectly (such as through an ITA) (20 CFR § 667.266(b)(1).)

After the July 12, 2004 Federal Register was issued, a State policy entitled “Faith-Based and Community Organizations” was revised to reflect: “Assistance may be used for such employment or training only when the

assistance is provided indirectly within the meaning of the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and not when the assistance is provided directly. Assistance provided through an Individual Training Account is generally considered indirect.”

c. Eligible Training Provider List. Describe the State’s process for providing broad customer access to the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information including at every One-Stop Career Center. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iii).)

Customers are able to access the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information through the Nebraska Department of Labor website at www.dol.nebraska.gov – TrainingLink – search by training provider. Programs approved for WIA training have a red check mark.

The list of eligible providers will contain the following information at a minimum:

- Program and provider name and address;
- Program completion rates for all individuals participating in the applicable programs;
- Percentage of all individuals participating in the applicable programs who obtain unsubsidized employment;
- Wages at placement;
- The rates of licensure or certification, attainment of academic degrees or equivalents (available by request);
- Program costs.

d. On-the-Job (OJT) and Customized Training (§§112(b)(17)(A)(i) and 134(b).) Based on the outline below, describe the State’s major directions, policies and requirements related to OJT and customized training.

The State “On-The-Job Training” policy is posted on the [Nebraska Department of Labor Web site](#). It identifies the minimal requirements for on-the-job training contracts including several standard assurances. One-Stop operators in a local area must collect performance information on providers of on-the-job training as identified in the policy. On-site monitoring reviews must be conducted at least once during the term of the contract. Monitoring of OJT contractors must include review of selection patterns and other areas of potential concern regarding trainees’ civil and other employment rights to ensure the quality of the One-stop operators section of training opportunities.

i. Describe the Governor’s vision for increasing training opportunities to individuals through the specific delivery vehicles of OJT and customized training.

The Governor’s vision for OJT and customized training involves strong partnerships with Nebraska’s community college system, economic development (local and state efforts) and the One Stop delivery system. Economic vitality and efficiency in government are two of Governor Heineman’s four priorities for his administration. While recognizing that the One Stop delivery system and specifically OJT and

customized training programs are local, not State driven or delivered, the Governor's vision is to continually seek ways to enhance current partnerships that will result in better utilization of OJT and customized training. The Governor will attempt to strengthen the use of OJT's and customized training by working with the State and local Workforce Investment Boards, dialogue with industry across the state to determine demand for these two training vehicles, and by utilizing opportunities between Economic Development and Workforce Development to leverage OJT and customized training for new and expanding businesses.

ii. Describe how the State:

- **Identifies OJT and customized training opportunities;**
- **Markets OJT and customized training as an incentive to untapped employer pools including new business to the State, employer groups;**
- **Partners with high-growth, high-demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and customized training strategies;**

- **Taps business partners to help drive the demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development; and determining appropriate lengths of training, and**
- **Leverages other resources through education, economic development and industry associations to support OJT and customized training ventures.**

In Nebraska, OJT and customized training opportunities are jointly identified and marketed between [the Nebraska](#) Department of Labor, Department of Economic Development, and the local One Stop delivery system. Information used to determine potential opportunities is based on new and expanding job opportunities. Both of these tools are a part of the economic development package presented to new employer prospects and existing employers who are looking to expand. A great example of how Nebraska partners with high-growth, high-demand industry is the Central Community College Nebraska Mechatronics Education Center. This initiative has provided OJT and customized training opportunities in the industry-driven mechatronics field. This effort was driven by industries like FISTO Corp., Behlen Manufacturing Co., BD Medical Surgical Systems, and Excel Corporation. Nebraska will continue to aggressively seek out and encourage these types of partnerships, which hinge on industry, education, economic development, and workforce development. Customized training and OJT will continue to be part of the economic development package, which makes initiatives like this work. Nebraska is utilizing initiatives like FutureForce Nebraska to do joint planning, curriculum development, and training outlines with businesses to have a demand-driven system. Three years ago the State embarked on FutureForce Nebraska. FutureForce Nebraska is an effort to identify career pathways in demand occupations and the pathways provide information on the skills and competencies, curriculum, length of training, and education needed for the high-demand career. The pathway also provides current and future labor market information like salary, number of openings, location of openings, etc. FutureForce Nebraska is designed and committed to educating all Nebraskans about the availability of jobs and what it takes to build a career within them.

Currently, the following career pathways are underway: Biotechnology, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, and Industrial Manufacturing and Engineering Systems. The state and local steering committees for FutureForce Nebraska represent local business, education, economic development, organized labor, One Stop Career Centers, and Health and Human Services.

The State will continue to seek out additional grant opportunities like Community-Based Job Training to increase opportunities to utilize OJT and customized training as part of the demand-driven system.

At the local level, Nebraska's 17 Career Centers partner with business, local economic development, and education to increase the utilization of OJTs and customized training. The Career Centers utilize Title I WIA for OJT opportunities and coordinate the use of the State's Worker Training Program for incumbent workers. In PY 2006 the State received a Veterans Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) grant. This grant has provided OJT opportunities to Omaha and Lincoln area veterans. The State investigated an opportunity to utilize a portion of State set-aside for customized training activities. This proposal was denied by the ETA Regional office due to the inability to utilize WIA funds to promote job creation and utilization of Career Center services through Economic Development organizations.

4. Service to Specific Populations. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

- a. Describe the State's strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the State's One-Stop delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals such as migrants and seasonal farmworkers, women, minorities, individuals training for non-traditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, people with limited English-speaking proficiency, and people with disabilities.)**

State policies and strategies ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services are accessible and meet the needs of multiple populations, for example:

- **Dislocated Workers**

Three State policies relate to meeting the needs of dislocated workers including: Eligibility for Dislocated Workers; State Dislocated Worker Unit Rapid Response Procedures; and Integrating Services under Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Workforce Investment Act.

- **Displaced Homemakers**

The policy on Eligibility for Dislocated Workers addresses the eligibility of displaced homemakers to ensure their consideration for services. The Local Plan Instructions require the local plans to address how their services shall meet the needs of displaced homemakers.

- **Low-Income Individuals, such as, Migrants and Seasonal Farmworkers**

The State Monitor Advocate has assisted with the development and review of Nebraska's plan. Her recommendations have been considered and incorporated where appropriate. The Monitor Advocate oversees the Wagner-Peyser Migrant Seasonal Farmworker program outreach and will regularly evaluate and submit its performance to insure that the required equity ratio indicators are being met or exceeded.

The State policy on "Eligibility for Adult Populations" states that:

"in the event that funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services funded with Title I adults funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals in the local area."

- **Women and Minorities**

The State “Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination” policy requires that recipients are obligated to ensure nondiscrimination and equal opportunity. It requires that every recipient must designate an Equal Opportunity Officer (EO Officer), except small recipients and service providers. Every application for financial assistance under Title I of WIA must include an assurance prohibiting “discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.”

The state will ensure nondiscrimination and equal opportunity through issuance of policies, required assurances in state and local plans, monitoring, and by developing and implementing a Methods of Administration.

- **Individuals training for Non-Traditional Employment**

The Local Plan Instructions require the local plans to address how their services shall meet the needs of individuals training for non-traditional employment.

- **Veterans**

The State policy “Veterans’ Priority Provisions” provides local areas with guidance regarding the Jobs for Veterans Act and how the veterans’ priority affects current business processes.

The “Nebraska Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program and Local Veterans’ Employment Representative Grant Modification Plan” provides information on how all of the Career Centers have fully integrated the Veterans program into their local service delivery system.

- **Public Assistance Recipients**

The State policy on “Eligibility for Adult Populations” states that: “in the event that funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services funded with Title I adults funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals in the local area.”

- **Older Individuals**

The State policy on the “Senior Community Service Employment Program” identifies issues that may be addressed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Local Workforce Investment Board and the local SCSEP sponsors.

Older individuals are also ensured nondiscrimination and equal opportunity by the “Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination” policy.

- **People with Limited English-Speaking Proficiency**

The State has established a Limited English Proficiency Plan (attached) which provides that individuals with limited English proficiency are able to access programs and services provided by the One Stop Career Centers and One Stop Partners on an equitable basis. This plan also addresses the entities that receive Federal financial assistance under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and programs and activities that are part of the One Stop delivery system operated by One Stop partners identified in the Act. The plan is a statewide plan, which covers the Office of Employment and Training, its five regional and two metro centers. The Office of Employment and Training has obtained interpreter services for clients with English as a Second Language (ESL) through the Division of Communications Language Line Services. This service is available in over 100 different languages to staff working with clients who have limited English speaking abilities and may need interpreter services. In addition, the Office of Employment and Training maintains a contractor for interpretation and translation services available as needed for Rapid Response presentations, public notices, and written materials.

- **People with Disabilities**

The One Stop Career Center staffs in Nebraska facilitate universal programmatic and environmental access to the One Stop system for persons with disabilities. One Stop Career Center staffs are knowledgeable about the complaint procedures under the Nondiscrimination provisions of the Workforce Investment Act, section 188. State program staff conducts accessibility assessments and recommends updates in One Stop facilities, services and accessibility equipment.

The State “Eligibility for Adult Programs” policy states: “If the family of a disabled individual does not meet the income eligibility criteria, the disabled individual is to be considered a low-income individual if the individual’s own income; (a) Meets the income criteria established in WIA Section 101(25)(B); or (b) Meets the income eligibility criteria for cash payments under any federal, state or local public assistance program. [WIA Sec. 101(25)(F)].

b. Describe the reemployment services you will provide to unemployment insurance claimants and the Worker Profiling services provided to claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their unemployment insurance benefits in accordance with section 3(c)(3) of the Wagner-Peyser Act.

Unemployment Insurance claimants are provided reemployment services through their local Employment Service Career Centers. These services begin with staff assisted service offered through an Employment Service registration and an interview with One Stop Career Center staff to help define current work search preferences and requirements. Additional services may include local labor market/employment information, available job openings, local training options, education and training on job search and matching and/or information and referral to other supportive services as appropriate. All Unemployment Insurance claimants are entered into the [State Hosted Management Information System](#) for the purpose of automated job matching as well as tracking for State and Federal reporting.

Unemployment Insurance claimants most likely to exhaust their benefits are identified by the Unemployment Insurance Worker Profiling system. Through coordination with the Career Center closest to the claimant's home address, the claimant is invited to the local Employment Services center via a computer generated, yet individualized letter for more intensive reemployment services. Failure to participate may lead to a delay or cancellation of benefits. Each claimant receives an orientation coordinated with a Workforce Coordinator who helps the claimant identify and define unique reemployment services. An individual employment plan (IEP) is written that details employment goals and next steps. This outline of needed or preferred actions requires mutual agreement between Career Center staff and the claimant and acts as a reference point with regard to the claimant's work search or training. An assessment is administered that allows the claimant an opportunity to explore comprehensive career options based on interest and skill requirements. Additional services include, but are not limited to, case management, counseling, resume assistance, referral to training, referral to employment and referral to supportive or partnering agencies as deemed appropriate. All claimants identified as likely to exhaust are entered into [the MIS](#) for the purpose of automated job matching as well as tracking for State and Federal reporting.

c. Describe how the State administers the unemployment insurance work test and how feedback requirements (under §7(a)(3)(F) of the Wagner-Peyser Act) for all UI claimants are met.

All Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants are required to register with Employment Services (ES). ES currently assures that each UI claimant is doing what a reasonable individual in his circumstances would do to obtain work (the work test) by utilizing several processes including, but not limited to, assessment, employment counseling, Job Search Workshops, and proficiency testing. The current ES and UI legacy systems are interfaced, allowing for automatic and immediate feedback regarding registration and job referral activity. As the UI technology systems are further enhanced, the plan is to provide even more information between automation systems to

ensure that persons receiving UI get the full benefit of services intended to help a person return to work from the One-Stop operations.

- d. Describe the State’s strategy for integrating and aligning services to dislocated workers provided through the WIA rapid response, WIA dislocated worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs. Does the State have a policy supporting co-enrollment for WIA and TAA?**

Yes, the State has provided a policy on “Integrating Services under Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Workforce Investment Act.” This policy requires that when a participant is approved for a WIA-funded intensive service or for any training activity, the certified worker shall be co-enrolled in the TAA program and the WIA Dislocated Worker program. [This policy, however, is only applicable for trade petitions filed prior to May 18, 2009.](#) The policy states that “all partner staff shall continue to work together and use the systems and processes in place to serve the adult and dislocated worker populations, rather than using a parallel process that duplicates services available through the One-Stop system.” Integration is further enhanced by requiring the tracking of the TAA participants through the WIA Management Information System (TRES).

- e. How is the State’s workforce investment system working collaboratively with business and industry and the education community to develop strategies to overcome barriers to skill achievement and employment experienced by the populations listed in paragraph (a.) above and to ensure they are being identified as a critical pipeline of workers?**

The State is working with business and industry and the education community on many projects designed to overcome barriers to skill achievement and employment. A significant portion of the federal incentives received for PY03 through PY05 performance have been awarded to the Nebraska Adult Education program for an innovative education project for English as a Second Language (ESL) students to develop job specific language skills. The employment areas of food service, meatpacking, and health are the three target industries. This approach has been implemented successfully in three areas in Nebraska, with success indicated by the degree of participation, support from employers, and individual progression/achievement by enrollees. In addition, Metropolitan Community College received a grant for \$801,130 as part of the national LEP and Hispanic Worker Initiative for a project called “Successful Training for Employment Placement and Unlimited Potential (STEP-UP) Nebraska.” The participants are recruited through participating employers, One-Stop Career Centers and community organizations.

- f. Describe how the State will ensure that the full array of One-Stop services are available to individuals with disabilities and that the services are fully accessible?**

A State policy on “Accessibility” was written to ensure that the full array of One-Stop services are available to individuals with disabilities. It states that to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of the WIA Title I program or activity, a recipient must furnish appropriate auxiliary aids or services where necessary. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is appropriate and necessary, such recipient must give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with a disability. Primary consideration means honoring the choice unless the agency can demonstrate that another equally effective means of communication is available, or that using the means chosen would result in a fundamental alteration in the service, program, or activity, or undue financial and administrative burdens.

Although the Navigator grant ended June 30, 2008, Career Center staff and/or State program staff continue to serve persons with disabilities in the following ways:

- Respond to issues and requests for information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA).
- Provide information regarding services for persons with disabilities and programs that support successful entry or re-entry into the workforce for persons with disabilities through partnerships with Vocational Rehabilitation, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and SSA employment support programs, Medicaid and Medicare provision.
- Conduct accessibility assessments and recommend updates in One Stop facilities, services and accessibility equipment.
- Conduct outreach to disability community, public and private agencies and businesses on One Stop services for persons with disabilities.
- Coordinate the referral of One Stop Career Center customers with disabilities to applicable agencies.

In Nebraska, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed creating a partnership between the Assistive Technology Partnership, the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Workforce Development. This partnership was formed to support the purchase of, and integration of, assistive technology solutions into the One Stop Resource Centers. Through local written agreements, specific commitments and equipment to be received were identified.

g. Describe the role LVER/DVOP staff have in the One-Stop Delivery System? How will the State ensure adherence to the legislative requirements for veterans' staff? How will services under this Plan take into consideration the agreement reached between the Secretary and the State regarding veterans' employment programs? (§§112(b)(7), 112(b)(17)(B); 322, 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41; and 20 CFR §1001.120.)

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER), conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment. This may be facilitated through the use of employer focused seminars or, in conjunction with employers, may involve veteran-focused job search workshops and/or the establishment of job search groups. Additionally, LVERs ensure that veterans are provided labor exchange services to meet their employment and training needs; especially addressing the needs of transitioning service personnel through the facilitation of Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops. In this manner, LVERs advocate for employment and training opportunities for veterans with business and industry, and community based organizations. Responsibilities may include planning and participation in job fairs to promote veterans, working with unions and apprenticeship programs and promoting credentialing and training opportunities for veterans, monitoring job listings from federal contractors and ensuring veterans' priority in referrals to these jobs.

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists serve as case managers for veterans with serious disadvantages for the job market and for veterans enrolled in federally-funded training programs, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation program. DVOP specialists develop job and training opportunities for veterans with special emphasis on veterans with service connected disabilities. DVOP specialists also provide outreach and offer assistance to disabled and other veterans by coordinating community and employer support by working with employers, local veterans' organizations, and other community-based organizations to link veterans with appropriate jobs and training opportunities.

As the State's primary source of staff assisted and self-assisted labor exchange services, all Career Centers have fully integrated the Veterans program into their local service delivery system. At least one fully qualified Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and/or Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff is located in 11 of the 17 Career Centers and at least one Employment Service staff [trained and certified in Veterans programs by the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI)] is located in the remaining six Career Centers. In addition, six of the 17 Career Centers, have been identified as Regional Career Centers with program oversight responsibilities for the Career Centers within their regional boundaries. All six Regional Career Centers have fully qualified DVOP and/or LVER staff available to provide program support to those Career Centers, in their region, without full time Veterans staff. The guidelines for the integration, provision, priority, training, placement and coordination of staff assisted core and intensive services as well as referral to other partner training programs for the veteran population is provided through the State Veterans' Plan and local Career Center Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and Business Plans. Nebraska received grant funding for the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) beginning in PY 2006. In PY 2009, they will not receive additional funding since it was only a 3 year grant. However, there will be remaining PY08 funding and follow-up tasks for this grant through March, 2010. The VWIP was a competitive grant awarded through U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training designed to provide employment and training services to eligible veterans in an attempt to place veterans into gainful employment.

- h. Department of Labor regulations at 29 CFR 37, require all recipients of Federal financial assistance from DOL to provide meaningful access to limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Federal financial assistance includes grants, training, equipment usage, donations of surplus property, and other assistance. Sub-recipients are also covered when Federal DOL funds are passed through from one recipient to a sub-recipient. Describe how the State will ensure access to services through the State's One-Stop delivery system by persons with limited English proficiency and how the State will meet the requirements of ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 26-02, (May 29,**

2003) which provides guidance on methods of complying with the Federal rule.

The description of how the State will ensure meaningful access to individuals with Limited English Proficiency is provided in detail in the attached statewide “Limited English Proficiency Plan.” After the release of TEGl 26-02, a State policy was issued setting forth requirements related to “Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination.” It states that “recipients of federal financial assistance must ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).” The policy addresses entities that receive financial assistance under Title I of WIA and programs and activities that are part of the One-Stop delivery system and that are operated by One-Stop partners listed in Section 121(b) of the WIA. It addresses the four-factor analysis for assessing the reasonable steps that must be taken to ensure LEP persons receive, free of charge, the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to their programs, services, and information. This policy states: “After the assessment process is complete and after determining what language assistance services are appropriate, a recipient should develop an implementation plan to address the identified needs of the LEP populations they serve.”

- i. Describe the State’s strategies to enhance and integrate service delivery through the One-Stop delivery system for migrant and seasonal farm workers and agricultural employers. How will the State ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers have equal access to employment opportunities through the State’s One-Stop delivery system? Include the following:**
- The number of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers(MSFWs) the State anticipates reaching annually through outreach to increase their ability to access core, intensive, and training services in the One-Stop Career Center System.**

Assessment of Need

Agriculture data from prior and current program years continue to be the foundation of this program plan to provide Wagner Peyser funded services and activities to the agricultural community under the One Stop Delivery System. Other key sources of information are the Nebraska Agriculture Statistical Services, USDA and NAF Multicultural Human Development Corporation (NAF). NAF is Nebraska's Workforce Investment Act, Section 167 agency.

Nebraska has six major crops, which employ seasonal and migrant agricultural workers. These crops include sugar beets, edible dry beans, potatoes, sorghum, and apples. In previous years, soybeans were included on this list but changes in planting techniques and weed control have virtually eliminated the need for migrant and seasonal farm workers. Row planting of the soy bean crop has been replaced by the drilling method of planting which provides closer spacing of the plants and makes the application of chemicals to control weeds more effective thereby reducing the need for hand weeding and hoeing efforts.

Sugar Beets: Sugar beet planting is the Nebraska crop most historically dependent on migrant and seasonal farm workers. The crop included approximately 45,200 acres in 2008 according to the USDA. This is a decrease of 16,100 acres from 2000 when 61,300 acres were planted. Sugar beets constitute less than 1% of the total crop acres. The acreage is determined in large measure by the processing capabilities at the three (down from seven processing plants in operation in the 1940's) Western Sugar Company plants in Nebraska and the Holly Sugar Company Plant at Torrington, Wyoming, which processes some contracted Nebraska acreage. Sugar beets are grown in the Far Western Nebraska counties of Box Butte, the southern half of Sioux, Morrill, and Scottsbluff, with limited acreage in Cheyenne and Banner counties. Several factors have produced a long-term decline in the need for migrant and seasonal farm workers for sugar beets. These factors include the introduction of new farming technology that provided for "planting to stand" which eliminated the demand for much of the hand labor previously required in the thinning process of sugar beets. Two plant diseases have also had a major negative impact on the industry in the 1990's: rhizomania is a stubborn virus that infects the root system and cercospora leaf spot that is a leaf-killing fungus. All these factors have produced a long-term decline in the need for migrant and seasonal farm workers for sugar beets.

Dry Edible Beans: Approximately 135,000 acres were planted in 2008 and this represents a 18.5% increase from 2007. Dry edible beans make up approximately 1% of the state's cropland and this crop maintains a need for migrant seasonal farm workers to perform the thinning, weeding, and limited harvesting tasks.

Potatoes: The number of acres planted to potatoes has declined slightly from the 20,500 acres in 2007, to 19,500 acres in 2008. However, this represents a repetition of the 19,500 acres planted in 2006. In spite of the decline in the acreage planted since the late 1990s, there still remains a need for hand labor that is required in the cultivation and processing of this crop including sorting, cutting, planting, and grading.

Corn for Grain: This is the most planted crop in the state. The Department of Agriculture reported 8.4 million acres of corn were grown in 2002. The number of planted acres decreased in 2003 to 8.1 million acres, rose to 8.25 million acres in 2004, and grew to 8.5 million acres in 2005. Planted acreage diminished to 8.1 million acres in 2006, then increased significantly to 9,400,000 acres in 2007, of which 9,200,000 acres were harvested. 8,800,000 acres were planted in 2008. This is a decrease of 6.4% planted acres. The primary growing region is the eastern two-thirds of the state, with some acres on irrigated lands in the Panhandle. The vast majority of corn acres go to grain and silage production, which requires virtually no migrant and seasonal workforce. The exception to this is the over 100,000 irrigated acres in the Platte Valley used to produce certified seed. These fields require a large seasonal workforce for about three weeks in midsummer for detasseling. Local high school and college students have traditionally made up the primary workforce, but it may also include migrant seasonal farm workers.

Sorghum for Grain: This crop requires some hand labor and involves migrant seasonal farm workers for hoeing and rogue weeding. Sorghum for grain plantings in 2004 totaled 550,000 acres, 340,000 in 2005, 370,000 acres in 2006, 350,000 acres in 2007, and 300,000 in 2008 (down 14% from 2007). This is down 82% from the high of 1,700,000 acres in 1992 and is below average (340,000 acres) for the past four years. Sorghum is grown primarily in the southern half of the state.

Apples: Otoe and Cass Counties on the eastern edge of Nebraska have several large, commercial apple orchards (large, but not large enough to earn statistical tracking and projections by the Department of Agriculture). The workforce and harvest during September and October may include migrant seasonal farm workers. According to the 2002 Census of Agriculture, there were 439 planted acres and 296 bearing acres. No data was available for 2007 or 2008.

Outreach Activities

The Monitor Advocate oversees the Wagner-Peyser program outreach to agricultural employers and migrant and seasonal farm workers. The State's Monitor Advocate (SMA) position is currently held in the agency's Office of General Counsel. The Monitor Advocate has coordinated with the H2A Coordinator on the program's responsibilities, and this coordination will remain critical as the State continues to transition to the new H2A rule that re-engineers the process by which employers obtain an H2A labor certification. The attestation-based application process has warranted enhanced outreach and referral services to migrant workers through the Interstate Clearance System. Migrant seasonal farm workers outreach activities are primarily coordinated through Nebraska's One Stop Delivery System. The manager of each local One Stop Career Center has been assigned the responsibility to conduct outreach to employers and to migrant and seasonal farm workers in their surrounding areas of service. The State Monitor Advocate, the NAF Multicultural Human Development Corporation and the local managers have reviewed the 2008 Annual Agricultural Submission.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) plans to partner with the H2A Coordinator to provide training to One Stop Career Center staff on activities such as Housing Inspections and the Complaint System to help serve the migrant population better. The SMA conducts annual field visits to significant One Stop Career Centers in the state and reports any findings.

Concentrated outreach using additional temporary staff will be provided, as necessary, during the peak periods of migrant and seasonal farm workers activity, traditionally April through June. The One Stop Career Center outreach workers will prepare a Log of Daily Outreach Activities to include: the number of migrant and seasonal agricultural workers contacted; follow-up contacts; and types of services provided, including names of individuals, when an application is taken, referral to a job is made, or a complaint is taken. This log will be prepared daily and forwarded to the State Monitor Advocate on a monthly basis.

Outreach efforts will include an explanation of the full menu of services available from the local One Stop Career Center as well as specific employment opportunities that are currently available. Outreach will also provide information on the complaint system and a basic summary of farm worker rights with respect to employment. Outreach workers will encourage migrant and seasonal farm workers to go to the nearest One Stop Career Center to receive required services. If the migrant and seasonal farm workers cannot or do not wish to access services at the Center, the outreach worker will provide onsite assistance in preparation of applications, assistance in obtaining referral to specific employment opportunities, assistance in preparing complaints, referral to supportive services, and assistance in making appointments and arranging transportation. In all instances where appropriate, bilingual staff will be available to conduct outreach activities.

To assist in outreach, the Nebraska Department of Labor has developed a brochure showing the services that are available and other services that are most needed by migrant and seasonal farm workers. The brochure has been produced in Spanish and English. A web page on the MSFW program has also been developed in Spanish and English on the Nebraska [Department of Labor](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov) web site at www.dol.nebraska.gov. The brochure and the web page will continue to be important resources, both for direct outreach and for connecting to other agencies within or without the One Stop Career Center area involved in serving the migrant and seasonal population through outreach activities. The three most important resource partners for migrant and seasonal farm workers in Nebraska are the Department of Education migrant program, migrant health programs, and the NAF Multicultural Human Development Corporation. Coordination between NAF, the State's Workforce Investment Act Section 167 agency, will continue to be of special importance to the Wagner-Peyser funded programs. Under the One Stop Delivery system, the effective working relationship between Wagner-Peyser programs and NAF Multicultural that has been present for years has been formalized in the written Memoranda of Understanding. This applies not only to the full-service One Stop Career Centers, but the affiliate centers and access points as well.

During [PY2009](#), the program expects to make approximately 300 contacts with migrant and seasonal farm workers. Approximately 500 migrant and seasonal farm workers are expected in the State during this time period.

Agricultural Employer Services Through the One Stop Delivery System
Services will be offered and coordinated through Nebraska's comprehensive and affiliate One Stop Career Centers. In the instance where Agricultural Employer Services are needed where a One Stop has not been established, they will be provided at a local One Stop Career Center.

The Nebraska Department of Labor will promote its full menu of services to agricultural employers through the use of handouts distributed by the migrant and seasonal farm worker outreach staff to both employers and migrants. Outreach to agricultural employers is part of the

daily responsibilities of every One Stop Career Center manager. Local radio programs are used to air agricultural job openings. Employers may use the [State Hosted Management Information System](#) on the Internet to list their openings, either through employer-direct entry or through any One-Stop or Workforce Development office. In addition, employers may post job openings with One Stop Career Center staff on the [State Hosted Management Information System](#) at any One Stop Career Center. Nebraska Department of Labor will offer employers Job Central Labor Exchange (JCLX), an Internet Web site made available to State workforce agencies to list job openings on a nationwide basis. The H2A Coordinator will follow the directive issued by the Chicago National Processing Center (for labor certification) in clearing H2A job orders in neighboring states and labor supply states in coordination with the State Monitor Advocate.

Even before the establishment of the One Stop Career Centers, Nebraska had a long record of success in serving the agricultural community and in meeting the federal requirements for providing equitable services to migrant and seasonal farm workers. The definition of "equitable service" focuses on these services: referral to jobs and supportive services, counseling, and special job development. The minimum requirement is that the percentage of migrant and seasonal farm workers receiving these services be at least equal to the level received by non-migrant and seasonal farm workers. The State Monitor Advocate will regularly evaluate the Wagner-Peyser performance to insure that the required equity ratio indicators are being met or exceeded. The One Stop Delivery system continues to enhance the level of service that has traditionally been provided. With the high level of service integration with the One Stop Partners, migrant and seasonal farm workers and agricultural employers are able to access readily an even greater range of employment and training services.

Staffing and Service Levels

Nebraska will hire migrant and seasonal farm workers outreach workers on an as needed basis. These positions will be hired on a temporary basis and it must be noted that temporary hires were planned in previous years but due to low service demands these positions were not utilized.

Wagner-Peyser has identified the following phone numbers to contact staff who will serve in person, or by phone, as language interpreters for all offices.

North Platte	Spanish	308-535-8022
Omaha	Spanish	402-595-3000
		402-444-4700
Lincoln	Spanish	402-471-4468
	Serbo Croation, Russian, German	402-471-2275
Scottsbluff	Spanish	308-635-1420

Norfolk	Spanish	402-370-3430
Columbus	Spanish	402-564-3125
Grand Island	Spanish	308-385-6300
Nebraska City	Spanish	402-873-3384

5. Priority of Service

- a. **What procedures and criteria are in place under CFR 663.600 for the Governor and appropriate local boards to direct One-Stop operators to give priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals for intensive and training services if funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are determined to be limited? (§§112(b)(17)(A)(iv) and 134(d)(4)(E).)**

Under the "Eligibility for Adult Programs" policy, it states "Local areas must give priority for adult intensive and training services to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individual, unless the local area has determined that funds are not limited under the criteria established" as discussed in the policy.

- b. **What policies and strategies does the State have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L.107-288)(38 USC 4215), that priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, in accordance with the provisions of TEGL 5-03 (9/16/03)?**

The Nebraska "One-Stop" Career Center Delivery System now serves as the cornerstone of the Workforce Investment system. The Career Centers unify training, education, and employment programs into one customer-friendly system in communities across the state. All Career Center's have a reception desk which is able to assist job seekers with basic information regarding all available programs, partners, and self-assisted services. It is at this point that identified veterans would be informed of their priority of service status and the availability of staff for their special assistance. [Veterans are provided priorities of service at all Nebraska Career Centers as outlined in the Veterans' Priority Provisions policy posted on the www.dol.nebraska.gov Website. \[Go into Workforce Investment Act – Policies.\]](#)

All veteran job seekers are registered and provided staff assisted services through the Career Center delivery system. Priority of services to veterans is further supported through the utilization of the [State Hosted Management Information System](#).

The [State Hosted Management Information System](#) automatically matches qualified applicants to available jobs. When a job search is run against any job opening, a list of qualified job seekers is created. All eligible veterans are placed at the top of the list. Career Center staff then has four available options to notify eligible veterans of available job openings

- 1) Call the veteran individually.
- 2) Email the veteran.
- 3) Create an automated phone message delivered to the veteran by an autodialer telephone system.
- 4) Create a job notification letter which is automatically mailed that day.

The requirement to register and provide staff assisted services to all veterans combined with the [State Hosted MIS](#) self-service labor exchange ensures veterans priority of services in the public labor exchange system.

The State policy on “Veterans’ Priority Provisions” was updated to incorporate the December 19, 2008 final rule and provides local areas with general guidance on the “Jobs for Veterans Act” and its scope, as well as, an understanding of how the veterans’ priority provisions affect the eligibility of veterans for Workforce Investment Act funded programs. It clarifies that “with respect to any qualified job training program, a covered person shall be given priority over nonveterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of law.” [§4215(a)(3)] Following the issuance of TEGL 22-04, this policy and the “Eligibility for Dislocated Workers” policy were revised to incorporate language clarifying the eligibility of military service members (non-retirees) and military spouses for services under the WIA Dislocated Worker formula grant program. [Due to guidance in TEGL 10-09, the “Veterans’ Priority Provisions” policy was further updated, particularly in the application procedures section.](#)

The Nebraska Workforce Development-Department of Labor is committed to serving veterans. It developed a site at <http://www.dol.nebraska.gov> (Veterans Services) to offer tools and information to veterans and apprise veteran customers of the provision of priority workforce services.

D. Rapid Response. (112(b)(17)(A)(ii).)

Describe how your State provides Rapid Response services with the funds reserved under section 133(a)(2).

1. Identify the entity responsible for providing Rapid Response services. Describe how Rapid Response activities involve local boards and Chief Elected Officials. If Rapid Response activities are shared between the State and local areas, describe the functions of each and how funds are allocated to the local areas.

The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Employment and Training, is the state’s designated Dislocated Worker Unit. This Unit is responsible for the planning and delivery of services to enable dislocated workers to transition to new employment as quickly as possible in the event of a permanent closure, mass layoff, or natural or other disasters resulting in mass job dislocation. The Rapid Response activities are carried out in the local areas by the state in conjunction with the local board and chief elected officials.

The state Dislocated Worker Unit will establish contact with employers and employee representatives immediately (within 48 hours) after the state is notified of a current or projected permanent closure or mass layoff. The purpose of this initial contact is to verify the layoff, provide information about Rapid Response services, and invite the employer to meet with the Rapid Response coordinator to establish a plan to provide such services. The Dislocated Worker Unit shall also contact the appropriate labor organization, if employees are represented and the local Workforce Development center within 48 hours to advise them of the layoff. The local labor representative and local workforce staff may also attend the initial contact meeting with the employer.

Local boards will be involved with Rapid Response through meetings and presentations with the Dislocated Worker Unit and input from local Workforce Development staff. The chief elected officials and local boards will be consulted to determine what further services are necessary to include in local Rapid

Response meetings. All Rapid Response functions are coordinated by the state unit.

2. Describe the process involved in carrying out Rapid Response activities.

a. What methods are involved in receiving notice of impending layoffs (include WARN Act notice as well as other sources)?

When WARN notices are received, the Dislocated Worker Unit makes contact with the employer within 48 hours. The program is explained and employers are given a packet of information outlining and describing Rapid Response meetings and services. After Rapid Response services are explained to the employer, and the initial onsite meeting takes place, Rapid Response meetings and appropriate workshops are scheduled. Workshops include labor market information, résumé preparation, and interviewing techniques. When feasible, surveys are distributed to all employees to determine their special needs and concerns. These surveys help determine the appropriate representatives who will present at Rapid Response meetings. Rapid Response sessions and related workshops can be held on site or in a facility of close proximity. Within the 60-day WARN period, most meetings take place at least 30 days prior to the last day of work. In addition, the Rapid Response Unit has provided a script to the Mass Layoff Statistics Analyst when contacting employers about layoff patterns that are not covered by the WARN Act. The script is intended to build awareness and encourage the use of Rapid Response services by employers in Nebraska.

b. What efforts does the Rapid Response team make to ensure that rapid response services are provided, whenever possible, prior to layoff date, onsite at the company, and on company time?

Components of the local One-Stop are brought to the work site, allowing employees access to early intervention and core services of the Workforce Development system. For example, Employment Services staff may begin registration, LMI gives Internet demonstrations, and assessment instruments can be completed by participants. These early efforts enable Workforce Development staff to begin identifying barriers to employment and training and to determine re-employment strategies immediately.

By offering early intervention and core services at the work site, many facets of the Workforce Development system are brought to employees before their dislocation and they can take steps to enter new employment prior to visiting the One-Stop center.

Ongoing conversations with employers further determine special needs/barriers employees may have. Local Workforce Development staff are informed and consulted on a regular basis as to the need and applicability for early intervention services and the appropriate action to take.

c. What services are included in Rapid Response activities? Does the Rapid Response team provide workshops or other activities in addition to general informational services to affected workers? How do you determine what services will be provided for a particular layoff (including layoffs that may be trade-affected)?

Rapid Response services include presentations from representatives of workforce development staff, unemployment insurance staff, consumer credit counseling agencies, and education/training

institutions. Presenters provide service, enrollment, and contact information for each of their areas.

The Rapid Response team coordinates workshops and other informational services such as job seeker information, resume preparation, interviewing skills, and local area labor market information through the local area community colleges.

Whenever possible, employees are surveyed to provide demographics of the group and to identify areas of concern and need. Surveys are used as a preliminary assessment tool to identify barriers to employment and to determine which program's services would be most beneficial to a particular workforce. Examples of survey demographics that will affect the Rapid Response presentations and early intervention efforts are: older workforce, educational levels, physically challenged, veterans, non-English speaking employees, interest in starting one's own business, etc. Survey results are shared with Rapid Response team members, local Workforce Development staff, and participating community colleges to enable partners in the Workforce Development system to tailor their presentations and onsite workshops.

3. How does the State ensure a seamless transition between Rapid Response services and One-Stop activities for affected workers?

The State Dislocated Worker Unit is responsible for providing Rapid Response services, in conjunction with the appropriate local Workforce Development staff. Local staff members attend Rapid Response meetings and serve as liaisons between the State and local area workforce development offices. The Rapid Response coordinator schedules the onsite meetings. Appropriate Rapid Response team members are involved in establishing and setting up workshops, which are held at the work site, the local Workforce Development Office, or other offsite locations.

4. Describe how Rapid Response functions as a business service? Include whether Rapid Response partners with economic development agencies to connect employees from companies undergoing layoffs to similar companies that are growing and need skilled workers? How does Rapid Response promote the full range of services available to help companies in all stages of the economic cycle, not just those available during layoffs? How does the State promote Rapid Response as a positive, proactive, business-friendly service, not only a negative, reactive service?

The Rapid Response coordinator facilitates presentations to the local boards, providing an overview of Rapid Response and the role of the Dislocated Worker Unit. Local Workforce Development staff and Rapid Response partners who currently meet with their boards are able to provide local input to the program. The Dislocated Worker Unit also has connection with local chambers and can use this resource to make presentations to the employer community for input and feedback to the program. The boards will be surveyed for content input of Rapid

Response services and information in their communities, appropriate to local business and industry needs. The Chief Elected Officials and local boards will be consulted to determine what enhancements can be made to Rapid Response from a business and community perspective. All Rapid Response functions are coordinated by the state unit.

The Dislocated Worker Unit contacts employers to explain Rapid Response services. Initial meetings may be arranged with employers and union representatives to determine the need for room rental, interpreters or equipment necessary for presentations. Posters and other publications are provided to announce upcoming meetings to employees. Employers are given a packet of information outlining and describing Rapid Response meetings and services.

The Dislocated Worker Unit seeks opportunities to provide information on Rapid Response services to businesses.

5. What other partnerships does Rapid Response engage in to expand the range and quality of services available to companies and affected workers and to develop an effective early layoff warning network?

Other agencies who may participate in local Rapid Response meetings include but are not limited to:

- a. Employment Service
- b. Workforce Investment staff
- c. Workforce Investment Act - Job Training
- d. Unemployment Insurance
- e. Consumer Credit Counseling
- f. Health and Human Services
- g. Education
- h. Economic Development
- i. Local Community Organizations
- j. Veterans Services
- k. Other appropriate agencies

The Dislocated Worker Unit partners with each of the above entities to determine consumer, employer, and community dislocated worker needs. The partners collaborate on the development of Rapid Response presentations and materials. The Dislocated worker Unit works to assimilate the partners into the seamless delivery service to dislocated workers.

6. What systems does the Rapid Response team use to track its activities? Does the State have a comprehensive, integrated Management Information System that includes Rapid Response, Trade Act programs, National Emergency Grants, and One-Stop activities?

The State utilizes a Rapid Response database that tracks the number of Rapid Response presentations, location of presentations, and presenters for each site.

The [State Hosted Management Information System](#) is used to collect required elements of information for performance measures reported on the federal Trade Act Participant Report (TAPR). This Management Information System includes information on participant benefit eligibility and actual benefits utilized by participants for Trade Act affected workers as well as dislocated workers covered by a National Emergency Grant. The State Dislocated Worker Unit also uses obligation worksheets to track each Trade individual's funding and education. In addition, the State maintains a Rapid Response database that tracks Rapid Response events by Local Area/Region, employer, and the number of individuals affected by the layoff or closure.

7. Are Rapid Response funds used for other activities not described above; e.g., the provision of additional assistance to local areas that experience increased workers or unemployed individuals due to dislocation events?

Yes. Local areas may request a portion of the Rapid Response funds retained at the State level if there is a justified need for additional dislocated worker funds to support case management and training services to dislocated workers. The funds are also used to provide support to Workforce Development activities for infrastructure needs, such as equipment. Finally, the funds are used to produce publications for Rapid Response presentations and public educational purposes.

E. Youth.

ETA's strategic vision identifies youth most in need, such as out of school youth and those at risk, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant and seasonal farmworker youth as those most in need of service. State programs and services should take a comprehensive approach to serving these youth, including basic skills remediation, helping youth stay in or return to school, employment, internships, help with attaining a high school diploma or GED, post-secondary vocational training, apprenticeships and enrollment in community and four-year colleges. (§112(b)(18).)

1. Describe your State's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need as described above. Include any State requirements and activities to assist youth who have special needs or barriers to employment, including those who are pregnant, parenting, or have disabilities. Include how the State will coordinate across State agencies responsible for workforce investment, foster care, education, human services, juvenile justice, and other relevant resources as part of the strategy. (§112(b)(18).)

The Local Plan Instructions policy for [PYs 2007 - 2010](#) require that each local area describe their priority system for providing youth services including “narrative on how the local area shall invest in youth who are most at-risk and in need.” The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board includes experts from education, human services, juvenile justice, Job Corps, and community based

organizations that provide insights into the coordination of youth funding and services. In addition, task groups are pulled together to discuss youth curriculum issues. Each year the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board reviews information on Carl D. Perkins Act coordination and addresses it in the Annual Report.

The Office of Employment and Training will continue to explore a “Youth Program Response Team” model to provide service presentations to youth in foster care (particularly those aging out of foster care), youth in the juvenile justice system, children of incarcerated parents, migrant youth, Native American and Indian youth and youth with disabilities. This service will be coordinated by the State in partnership with each of the local area Career Center partners. The presentations will assure that these youth are provided information on accessing Career Center services, job search, basic skills training and occupational training.

2. Describe how coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs will occur. (§112(b)(18)(C).)

A representative of Job Corps is a member of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board. Additional coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs shall occur at the local level. The State policy on “Youth Councils” requires that membership of each youth council shall include “members who represent the Job Corps, if a Job Corps Center is located in the local area represented by the council” and “members who represent youth service agencies, such as juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies.”

3. How does the State Plan to utilize the funds reserved for Statewide activities to support the State’s vision for serving youth? Examples of activities that would be appropriate investments of these funds include:

a. utilizing the funds to promote cross agency collaboration;

Statewide funds were used to establish a youth website that allowed youth from any area of the state to be advised of agencies available in their area that provide services to youth.

b. demonstration of cross-cutting models of service delivery;

The State of Nebraska has been fortunate to receive federal incentive dollars based on performance. Some of these funds have been used to establish a Statewide Career Management System “NebraskaCareerConnection.org” provides for a coordinated career information system. Partners and users of the Nebraska Careers system include: K-16 Career Development (individual youth and their parents/guardians); Postsecondary Higher Education and Training; School Counselors, Teachers, Case Workers, and Administrators; Parents and Community Based Organizations; Business and Industry Employers; Department of Labor. This system utilizes the sixteen Career Clusters as a model for career development and planning for education and workforce development to create a common and consistent language among all entities involved. Phase I of the system was implemented in Nebraska schools during the Fall of 2006. Phase II will be completed over the next two years to expand the K-16 tool so that it can be used as a life long career management system. This system will be

updated by the Nebraska Departments of Education and Labor on a regular basis.

c. development of new models of alternative education leading to employment; or

In the past, Nebraska used Statewide funds to support joint projects between alternative schools and Workforce Investment Act local offices. Project proposals had to identify the use of funds and address project application criteria. Applications were reviewed by the Nebraska Department of Labor and the Nebraska Department of Education. Through these projects, many local Workforce Development offices established stronger relationships with their local alternative schools. Referrals will continue to provide the opportunity for students to receive WIA services.

d. development of demand-driven models with business and industry working collaboratively with the workforce investment system and education partners to develop strategies for bringing these youth successful into the workforce pipeline with the right skills.

In April, 2003, several partners including: Nebraska Workforce Development, Department of Labor; Greater Lincoln Workforce Investment Area; Greater Nebraska Workforce Investment Area; Greater Omaha Workforce Investment Area; the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension; and Nebraska Department of Education attended a retreat in Aurora, Nebraska. The foundation for developing curriculum to meet the Occupational Skills competencies was started at this meeting. The curriculum “Pathways to Success: Nebraska’s Occupational Skills” is meant to help participants:

- Understand job requirements and related skills for occupations of their choice;
- Identify skills they may already have that will help them in a particular career;
- Practice presenting themselves in positive ways to prospective employers;
- Practice making ethical decisions on the job;
- Gain job specific skills through hands-on-experiences;
- Practice listening and communication skills;
- Identify next steps on the career ladder;
- Learn how to care for themselves on the job and avoid or reduce stress;
- Set career goals; and
- Understand and gain necessary technology skills for their chosen pathway.

Business members of the Local Workforce Investment Boards critiqued the curriculum after it was developed to ensure it would accurately meet the needs of industry. Currently, many Nebraska secondary and post-secondary educational institutions utilize this curriculum. In the next two years, the State plans to continue to look for ways of partnering with business and industry to better prepare youth to transition into the workforce pipeline.

e. Describe how your State will, in general, meet the Act's provisions regarding youth program design. (§§112(b)(18) and 129(c).)

The state will not provide the required program elements to participants. The local areas will ensure that through their youth program they will provide the ten required program elements to youth. The state will monitor to ensure that these elements are available. The linkages of youth programs to employers will occur through the participation of business representatives on the local Workforce Investment boards and youth council. Local programs have the discretion to determine what specific program services will be provided to a youth participant, based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy.

Local youth programs must make the following services available to youth participants:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction, leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school services, as appropriate;
- Summer employment opportunities that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning;

Local boards are required to offer summer employment opportunities in the local youth program. The summer youth employment must provide direct linkages to academic and occupational learning, and may provide other elements and strategies as appropriate to serve the needs and goals of the participants. The decision as to how much of available youth funds will be used for summer and for year-round youth activities will be determined by the local board. The summer youth employment opportunities element is not intended to be a stand-alone program. Local programs should integrate a youth's participation in that element into a comprehensive strategy for addressing the youth's employment and training needs. Youths who participate in summer employment opportunities must be provided with a minimum of twelve months of follow-up services.

The chief elected officials are the grant recipients for local youth funds, unless another entity is chosen to be grant recipient or fiscal agent under WIA Section 117(d)(3)(B). If, in the administration of the summer employment opportunities element of the local youth program, providers other than the grant recipient/fiscal agent are used to provide summer youth employment opportunities, these providers must be selected by awarding a grant or contract on a competitive basis based on the recommendation of the youth council and on criteria contained in this plan. The law provides specific core indicators of performance for youth, and requires that all participating youth be included in the determination of whether the local levels of performance are met. Program operators can help ensure positive outcomes for youth participants by providing them with continuity of services.

- As appropriate, paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;

Work experiences are planned, structured learning experiences that take place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experiences may be paid or unpaid and may be in the private, for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Work experiences are designed to enable youth to gain exposure to the working world and its requirements. Work experiences should help youth acquire the personal attributes, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain a job and advance in employment. The purpose is to provide the youth participant with the opportunities for career exploration and skill development and is not to benefit the employer, although the employer may, in fact, benefit from the activities performed by the youth. Work experiences may be subsidized or unsubsidized and may include the following elements: instruction in employability skills or generic workplace skills; exposure to various aspects of an industry; progressively more complex tasks; internships and job shadowing; the integration of basic academic skills into work activities; supported work, work adjustment, and other transition activities; entrepreneurship; and other elements designed to achieve the goals of work experience.

In most cases, on-the-job training is not an appropriate work experience activity for youth participants under age 18. Local program operators may choose, however, to use this service strategy for eligible youth when it is appropriate based on the needs identified by the objective assessment of an individual youth participant. Funds under the Act may be used to pay wages and related benefits for work experiences in the public; private; for-profit; or non-profit sectors where the objective assessment and individual service strategy indicate that work experiences are appropriate.

- Occupational skill training, as appropriate;

Individual Training Accounts are not allowed for youth participants. However, individuals age 18 and above, who are eligible for training services under the adult and dislocated worker program, may receive Individual Training Accounts through that program. To the extent possible, in order to enhance youth participant choice, youth participants should be involved in the selection of educational and training activities.

- Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours, as appropriate;

Leadership development opportunities for youth may include the following: exposure to postsecondary educational opportunities; community and service learning projects; peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring; organizational and team work training, including team leadership training; training in decision-making, including determining priorities; citizenship training, including life skills

training such as parenting, work behavior training, and budgeting of resources; employability; and positive social behaviors.

- Supportive services;

Supportive services may include the following: linkages to community services, assistance with transportation costs, assistance with childcare and dependent care costs, assistance with housing costs, referrals to medical services; and assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tool costs, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear.

- Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period for a total of not less than 12 months;
- Follow-up services:

All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months and they may be provided beyond twelve (12) months at the local board's discretion. The types of services provided and the duration of services must be determined based on the needs of the individual. Follow-up services for youth may include: Leadership development and supportive service activities, regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise, assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education, work-related peer support groups, adult mentoring; and tracking the progress of youth in employment after training.

- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.

The design framework of the local youth programs must:

- Provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant. The assessment shall include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and developmental needs of such participant. A new assessment of a participant is not required if the provider carrying out such a program determines it is appropriate to use a recent assessment of the participant conducted pursuant to another education or training program;
- Develop individual service strategies for each participant that shall identify an employment goal (including, in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment), appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant taking into account the results of the objective assessment. A new service strategy for a participant is not required if the provider carrying out such a program determines it is

appropriate to use a recent service strategy developed for the participant under another education or training program;

- Provide the following:
 - a) Preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities, in appropriate cases;
 - b) Strong linkages between academic and occupational learning;
 - c) Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities, in appropriate cases; and
 - d) Effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to the job market; and local and regional employers.

Linkages

In coordinating the programs authorized under this section, youth councils shall establish linkages with educational agencies responsible for services to participants as appropriate.

F. Business Services. (§§112 (a) and 112(b)(2).)

Provide a description of the state's strategies to improve the services to employers, including a description of how the State intends to:

- 1. Determine the employer needs in the local areas and on a Statewide basis.**
- 2. Integrate business services, including Wagner-Peyser Act services, to employers through the One-Stop system.**
- 3. Streamline administration of Federal tax credit programs within the One-Stop system to maximize employer participation? (20 CFR part 652.3(b), §112(b)(17)(A)(i).)**

Two critical and valuable methods to assess employers' needs statewide and locally are through the use of surveys and a strong relationship with the employer communities. Both surveying to assess and measure progress on meeting the expectations of the employer community and networking with employers have significantly increased.

The Employer Satisfaction Survey is conducted on a [quarterly](#) basis in order to evaluate the satisfaction that employers have with Labor Exchange services across the state. Employers who have placed a job order with the Career Center within the [previous quarter](#) are asked [five](#) standard questions related to the services they received and are asked to rate their level of satisfaction [by indicating "exceeded, met, or below expectations or no response"](#). [A section for "general comments" is also made available to employers for additional information.](#) These results are internally evaluated by State administrative staff as well as Career Center managers to ensure a high level of customer satisfaction is being met in each of the [17](#) Career Centers.

Statewide Job Fair participation occurs throughout the year in each of our regions across the state. The Workforce Development Career Centers are major contributors or sponsors at the majority of these job fairs. [Additionally, a listing of upcoming job fair and career events is available on the NDOL website, with events listed by region and by date.](#)

Business Services Representatives have been established in each of the Career Centers across the state. The primary responsibilities of these staff are to conduct outreach services with the employers in their community. Marketing tools have been created and made available to staff and managers conducting employer outreach. [Employer portfolios that include a full listing of services available to employers has been developed and is available either in hard copy or CD format.](#)

Marketing materials such as brochures, packets of information including forms and procedures are provided to promote the Work Opportunity Tax Credits and Welfare-to-work Tax Credits Program. While marketing of this program involves all facets of Workforce Development, efficiency in administration will continue to be at the state level through centralized operation. State program administrative staff will make presentations to various groups of employers, partner agencies and especially, the pre-release classes of the Correctional System in the State. Other forms of marketing include exhibit booths at conferences and symposiums across the state. One-Stop Centers, including partners such as Vocational Rehabilitation Services, will have information for job seekers and employers. Program information is available on the [Nebraska Department of Labor](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov) web site at www.dol.nebraska.gov.

Cost reimbursable services are also available to employers at each of the Career Centers. These services are those that extend beyond the basic core Wagner Peyser services offered to employers and the cost is based upon an established fee structure approved by the Commissioner of Labor. This menu of services, as well as the fee structure is reviewed and updated as necessary on an annual basis, or as the need arises.

G. Innovative Service Delivery Strategies (§112(b)(17)(A).)

- 1. Describe innovative service delivery strategies the State has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key State goals. Include in the description the initiative's general design, anticipated outcomes, partners involved and funds leveraged (e.g., Title I formula, Statewide reserve, employer contributions, education funds, non-WIA State funds).**

As a result of a critical need for a storefront hiring location, a unique partnership was forged between the Nebraska Workforce Development Career Center in North Platte and the Union Pacific Railroad. For the UP Pilot Program, Career Center Staff were trained by Union Pacific to facilitate the application, testing, orientation and interviewing of applicants for Train Service positions available in the North Platte Bailey Yard. A specific classroom equipped with 15 computers and other necessary equipment, with its own outside entrance, serves as the "storefront" and hiring sessions are held on a weekly basis. The Pilot Program began in January of 2007 and has since been evaluated and renewed until the end of December, 2010. Eventually we would like to be the hiring source for all Union Pacific Railroad positions in North Platte. This program is funded entirely on a cost reimbursable basis.

The Metro Business Services Pilot Project partners the Lincoln and Omaha Career Center Business Services Units to provide enhanced services to employers in the metropolitan area of southeast Nebraska. The Pilot was launched in early January 2007 with Steve Richman as Manager of the Metro Business Services Unit. The Pilot grew out of an innovative approach to Business Services begun in the Lincoln Career Center approximately two years ago, that has generated dramatic growth in Employer Services and, as a result, growth in opportunity for job seekers as well. Wagner-Peyser funds are utilized for Employment Services activities.

The Scottsbluff Career Center Business Services Pilot, begun in October of 2006, emulates the Metro Business Services model in a more rural area, focusing activity and energy on developing employers and providing key services, thereby increasing opportunity for job seekers.

A grant of \$1,639,403 was awarded to Central Community College in Nebraska that runs through 2007 as part of a national advanced manufacturing workers training effort under the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative which is

helping workers prepare for and find jobs in America's fastest growing industries. Central Community College's Nebraska Mechatronics Education Center will use the grant to provide workers with industry-driven mechatronics training leading to high-skill, high-wage manufacturing jobs. Mechatronics is the synergistic integration of multiple engineering disciplines, such as mechanical design, electronics and computer control, to produce new or improved devices and systems. Key partners in this project include six Nebraska community colleges, ten Nebraska high schools, FISTO Corp., Behlen Manufacturing Co., BD Medical Surgical Systems, Excel Corporation, three four-year universities, Nebraska Workforce Investment Boards and government agencies. Private sector funding was leveraged with the federal funding. The Center developed a unique curriculum that is available to incumbent workers, new workers and college students through classroom and simulation training. To promote careers in advanced manufacturing, teachers and high school students also have access to the innovative simulation software. Efforts are already underway to procure additional grant funds to continue the project.

Construction Career Academies is another of the President's High Growth Job Training Initiatives. The grantee is the Associated General Contractors of America. Nebraska is one of the nine partner states. This grant for \$235,500 and leveraged resources of \$952,500 will sustain existing Construction Career Academies in two cities and develop additional Construction Career Academies in eight local communities.

Another innovative service strategy the State continues to participate in is the Cabela's/Workforce Development/Manpower employee recruitment project. Cabela's, a leading Nebraska employer in retail and catalog sales, approached Nebraska Workforce Development to help meet their hiring and employee retention needs. Nebraska Workforce Development developed a partnership with Manpower, Inc. and presented Cabela's with a solution to solving their hiring needs. Through the Lincoln Career Center, Nebraska Workforce Development and Manpower, Inc. designed a recruitment, assessment, hiring, and payroll model that resulted in over 482 customer service agents being hired at Cabela's Lincoln service facility. Using the Nebraska Workforce JobLink as a recruitment site to post openings and Manpower's NetSelect tool for web pre-screening, the delivery of recruitment cost savings and high-quality candidates was ensured. Nebraska Workforce Development staff assessed applicants, utilizing the Career Center's computer lab, and forwarded qualified applicants to the Manpower representative housed in the Career Center to begin the hiring process. At the end of the project, 1465 employees had been recruited, 1263 were scheduled for testing, 729 passed the assessment provided by Manpower, and 482 were hired by Cabela's. According to Cabela's, 91% of the individuals placed through this project in the Lincoln facility completed the Christmas season, the highest of any other center in the U.S. The average for all Cabela call centers, including the Lincoln center, came in at 79%. Nebraska Workforce Development utilized Wagner-Peyser resources for this project, as well as receiving revenue from the contract that was awarded to Manpower as a cost reimbursable service.

Lastly, a rural job creation initiative kicked off in February of this year. The Marriott Corporation teamed up with the North Platte Career Center to pilot an at-home customer care agent project. The proposal submitted to Marriott by Workforce Development, the local Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Corporation allows workers to take hotel reservations by phone while working at home. Marriott initially

looked at 30 positions and due to the high demand of interest from job seekers has raised the potential openings to 60. As this pilot reaches success, Marriott may look at expanding to 200 employment opportunities taking the pilot statewide.

2. **If your State is participating in the ETA Personal Re-employment Account (PRA) demonstration, describe your vision for integrating PRAs as a service delivery alternative as part of the State's overall strategy for workforce investment.**

N/A

- H. Strategies for Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations (§112(b)(17)(i).) – Reaching those most in need is a fundamental element of the demand-driven system's goal to increase the pipeline of needed workers while meeting the training and employment needs of those most at risk. Faith-based and community organizations provide unique opportunities for the workforce investment system to access this pool of workers and meet the needs of business and industry. Describe those activities to be undertaken to: (1) increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the One-Stop delivery system; and (2) expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' clients and customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the State. Outline those action steps designed to strengthen State collaboration efforts with local workforce investment areas in conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce investment system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the State's workforce investment areas to help meet the objectives of the Workforce Investment Act.**

The State recognized the need to: ensure equal protection of the laws for faith-based and community organizations; further the national effort to expand opportunities for faith-based and other community organizations so that they may better meet social needs in America's communities; and ensure the economical and efficient administration and completion of government contracts. A State policy "Faith-Based and Community Organizations" was updated following the issuance of the July 12, 2004 federal register and it is posted on its www.dol.nebraska.gov web site. This policy identifies actions the Local Workforce Investment Boards and Workforce Development agencies are encouraged to take including:

- Appoint members to Boards who are specifically familiar with local grassroots faith-based organizations to work alongside representatives who are familiar with a broad range of other community groups and service providers;
- Create campaigns that will educate appropriate local faith-based and community-based organizations about the workforce investment system, including available grants and opportunities for participation and partnership with Career Centers;
- Ensure that information on websites about applying for grants or becoming service providers is easy to find and understand for those non-profit organizations seeking to partner with the workforce investment system;
- Ensure that beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of their programs understand their rights by having literature available for the beneficiaries explaining their rights; and
- Keep informed about the latest opportunities and outreach materials by accessing the U.S. Department of Labor's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at their website at <http://www.dol.gov/cfbci>. Questions related to Nebraska should be directed to the USDOL Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives website Point of Contact, Sue DeMoss, Lead Program Monitor, at the Nebraska Department of Labor, Phone: (402) 471-9870.

In addition, the State "Local Plan Instructions" required that each local plan address "what strategies the CEO and Local WIBs shall create to utilize the leadership of faith-based and community-based organizations."

X. State Administration

A. What technology infrastructure and/or management information systems does the State have in place to support the State and local workforce investment activities such as a One-Stop operating system designed to facilitate case management and service delivery across programs, a State job matching system, web-based self service tools for customers, fiscal management systems, etc.? (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(1) and 112(b)(8)(B).)

The state is implementing new technology. The State Hosted Management Information System has a common data system. The system collects the demographic and partner/program information required by the Department of Labor and partners and allows for a single point of entry for applicants receiving services from one or more partnering agencies and/or programs. Services to partnering agencies are streamlined, no longer duplicated, and referrals are far more timely and accurate. Additionally, the Management Information System maintains the ability to track waiting times for all One Stop customers, customer service times, and case management information beyond what is required by the Department of Labor depending on whether the partners want to share.

The state utilizes the State Hosted Management Information System as the source for Nebraska's federal reporting data. This system is the primary source for tracking the majority of labor exchange activities, ranging from Employer Services, job orders, automated job matching and the mode of contact to referrals to partnering agencies, Unemployment Claimants, Veterans Services, Re-employment services and all related services.

Fiscal management is facilitated through the Crystal Enterprise System. This reporting program allows for tracking of budget information, along with federal and local benchmark performance either across the state or through a unique career center.

The State Hosted Management Information System includes a self-service web-based tool available to job seekers and employers alike. The Management Information System is available twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and allows for access and utilization without having the need to interface with Career Center staff. The previous tool to provide services for employers underwent major enhancements in PY 2004. In PY 2009 and PY 2010 further improvements are under way.

For those wishing to investigate training options and approved training providers, the Nebraska Department of Labor Website at www.dol.nebraska.gov at Labor Market Information provides TrainingLink, a self-service web-based tool that compliments the State Hosted Management Information System in format as well as information. Through TrainingLink users can access information on education and training providers in a city or region, by course of study or by occupational title. TrainingLink also has the ability to capture information from program graduates living and working in the state, employment prospects, and performance of institutions providing training in the Workforce Investment area.

B. Describe the State's plan for use of the funds reserved for Statewide activities under WIA §128 (a)(1).

Each funding source will contribute not more than fifteen-percent (15%) to pay for the statewide-required activities and other allowable statewide activities. This set-aside includes the five-percent (5%) of funds used for administration by the state. The other portion will be used to pay for the following required activities:

- Disseminate the state list of eligible providers of training services;
- Conduct evaluations of activities authorized in this section of the law;
- Provide incentive grants to local areas;
- Provide technical assistance to local areas;
- Assist in establishment and operation of One-Stop delivery system;
- Operate a fiscal and management information system (MIS);

And may be used for the following allowable activities:

- Capacity building and technical assistance to local areas, One-Stop operators, One-Stop partners, eligible providers, including development and training of staff.
- Research and demonstrations.
- Implement innovative, incumbent worker training programs.
- Promote innovative initiatives in partnership with education and economic development that achieve a regional strategy approach to addressing workforce and economic development solutions.
- Support for identification of eligible providers of training services.
- Implement innovative programs for displaced homemakers (to include those who receive public assistance and are within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility).
- Implement programs to increase number of individuals trained and placed in non-traditional employment.
- Establish and implement innovative projects in partnership with economic development that spur job creation and entrepreneurial efforts, particularly in the rural areas.
- Support system-wide efforts that promote awareness and service delivery to individuals with disabilities.
- Promote system-wide efforts that support demand-driven, high growth jobs.
- Other activities authorized in this section that the state deems necessary to assist local areas in carrying out activities through the statewide Workforce Investment system.

C. Describe how any waivers or workflex authority (both existing and planned) will assist the State in developing its workforce investment system. (§§189(i)(1), 189(i)(4)(A), and 192.)

- Recognizing the need for more flexibility, the Governor received an extension in PY07 and PY08 of the approved waiver for PY05 and PY06 to allow for the transfer of 100 percent between adult and dislocated workers funding streams. [Sec. 133(b)(4); 20 CFR 667.140] [This waiver does not apply to Recovery Act funds.] In PY09, the Governor received approval for a waiver [not applicable to Recovery Act funds] allowing transfer of funds up to 50 percent between adult and dislocated worker funding. The Governor is requesting an extension of the PY09 transfer of funds waiver through PY10.

- The Governor received a waiver to extend the period of “Initial Eligibility of Training Providers” through June 30, 2010. He requests an extension of this waiver through PY10. This waiver was originally approved to postpone the “Subsequent Eligibility of Training Providers” until July 1, 2007. The extension was needed to provide the broadest range of eligible training providers to enable individuals to make informed choices related to their training goals. [20 CFR 663.530]
- The Governor requested a waiver to provide intensive and training services to individuals impacted by Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) with existing WIA funds greater than 6 months prior to the date of dislocation. [Sec. 101(9) and Preamble to Regulations, Federal Register, August 11, 2000] This waiver was revised and approved for PY08 to permit the State to use a portion of local area formula allocation funds to provide incumbent worker training and other statewide employment and training activities. The Governor **decided not to request** this waiver for PY09 or PY10.
- The Governor requested (but did not receive) a waiver to allow for the option of providing Wagner-Peyser Act-funded services with either merit or non-merit staff employees. [20 CFR 652.215]
- In December, 2007, a waiver was requested to allow Nebraska to replace the WIA 17 performance measures with the Common Measures. [Sec. 136(b)(2) and (c)(1); 20 CFR 666.100 and 666.300.] This waiver was approved through June 30, 2009 **and then in June, 2009, this waiver’s approval was extended through June 30, 2010.** The Governor requests this waiver **again** be extended through June 30, 2011.

The State does not anticipate requesting work flex authority at this time.

D. Performance Management and Accountability. Improved performance and accountability for customer-focused results are central features of WIA. To improve, states need not only systems in place to collect data and track performance, but also systems to analyze the information and modify strategies to improve performance. (See Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 15-03, Common Measures Policy, December 10, 2003.) In this section, describe how the State measures the success of its strategies in achieving its goals, and how the State uses this data to continuously improve the system.

- 1. Describe the State’s performance accountability system, including any state-system measures and the state’s performance goals established with local areas. Identify the performance indicators and goals the State has established to track its progress toward meeting its strategic goals and implementing its vision for the workforce investment system. For each of the core indicators, explain how the State worked with local boards to determine the level of the performance goals. Include a discussion of how the levels compare with the State’s previous outcomes as well as with the State-adjusted levels of performance established for other States (if available), taking into account differences in economic conditions, the characteristics of participants when they entered the program and the services to be provided. Include a description of how the levels will help the State achieve continuous improvement over the two years of the Plan. (§§112(b)(3) and 136(b)(3).)**
Prior to PY 08, the state used the 17 performance measures as prescribed in Section 136 of the Workforce Investment Act. In May, 2005, Nebraska negotiated with representatives of the Federal Regional Office to establish the State performance goals for the seventeen WIA performance measures. The proposed goals were based on historical performance, differences in economic conditions, the characteristics of participants when they entered the program, and the services to be provided. The negotiated goals are included in Attachment C. Performance goals for Program Year 2005 and 2006 were negotiated with the local areas on June 2, 2005. Negotiations involved local and State WIB representatives and administrative staff, and the discussion centered around an accountability system that aligns with the

demand-driven action steps identified in their local Plans. The State provided information to each local area on their performance for the past three years, previous negotiated goals, and GPRA goals for PY 05. Specific economic conditions and/or participant characteristics were presented and discussed. All of the performance goals were negotiated significantly higher for PY 05 and 06 than for previous years. This was done to insure the high quality of service and outcomes currently delivered through WIA in Nebraska, as well as challenge the local areas to continue to seek and achieve program service improvement. Performance negotiations for PY's 2007 and 2008 took place in late PY 2006. The three local areas agreed to accept the goals that were negotiated by the State with the Federal representatives for PY07 and PY08. In June, 2008 Nebraska received a waiver to permit the State to replace the WIA seventeen performance measures with the common measures for PY08. Negotiations again took place with the Federal representatives. In November of 2008, new values were renegotiated for the Adult and Dislocated Workers Entered Employment Rates and new values were set for the Youth common measures. The locals agreed to accept the State values for PY08. The State decided to use the PY08 negotiated goals for PY09. [However, following the decline in economic conditions and after the 2/23/10 NWIB Compliance Committee meeting, the State requested a renegotiation of the PY09 Adult and Dislocated Worker measures. On the recommendation of the Compliance Committee, the NWIB Executive Committee at their 4/2/10 meeting compared the disparity of wages within the State and considered adjusting average earnings performance values. The State proposed that for the PY10 local negotiation process and beyond, there is an understanding of the need for local wage data consideration and the establishment of a proportional relationship when setting the Adult and Dislocated Worker average earnings goals.](#)

2. Describe any targeted applicant groups under WIA Title I, the Wagner-Peyser Act or Title 38 Chapters 41 and 42 (Veterans Employment and Training Programs) that the State tracks. (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(3) and 136(b)(2)(C).)

The State tracks all Unemployment Insurance recipients in the State of Nebraska that register with the Labor Exchange program. All Nebraskans who receive Unemployment Insurance (UI) are required to register with Employment Service. Once a UI recipient has come to the One Stop Career Center to register, the Employment Service staff registers them into the [State Hosted Management Information System](#). Data regarding UI client participation and compliance, as well as services provided can in turn be shared with Unemployment Insurance staff.

The tracking of Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants is expanded a level further in Nebraska by tracking those claimants who have been referred to and are receiving enhanced services through the Re-Employment Services program. Employment Services attempts to contact all UI claimants who are referred by UI to participate in the Re-Employment Services program. These Re-Employment Services clients are tracked through the [State Hosted Management Information System](#) and reports are generated to reflect services and participation for this target population. Nebraska has expanded the Re-Employment Services program over the past to serve several categories of UI claimants. These reports can be further broken down to reflect data on each of the individual groups of Re-Employment Services participants.

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers population is also tracked and reported on separately in the State of Nebraska. This population is tracked in the [State](#)

[Hosted Management Information System](#) and provided Labor Exchange services, as well as any partner services that may be deemed appropriate. Nebraska reports quarterly on the number of Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers that are in the State, as well as on the services that are provided to this population. These quarterly reports are federally mandated and submitted electronically to the U.S. Employment and Training Administration using the software that has been provided.

The State also tracks all Veterans who register with the Labor Exchange program. A Veteran who enters a One Stop Career Center for job search assistance, is required to register and meet with a Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER), a Disabled Veteran Outreach program Specialist (DVOP) or with trained non-veteran staff if no LVER and /or DVOP is available. Their registration and services are tracked through [the State Hosted Management Information System](#). Nebraska is required to use data from these systems to report quarterly to the federal Director of Veteran Employment and Training (DVET) for the State. The data from these systems is utilized to reflect preferential service to veterans versus non-veteran populations by way of staff assisted services, job referrals, case management services and placement ratios.

WIA Title I targeted applicant groups (Public Assistance Recipients, Veterans, Individuals with Disabilities, Older Individuals, Displaced Homemakers, and Out-of-School Youth) are tracked through the [State Hosted Management Information System](#) and reported out in the WIA Annual Report.

3. Identify any performance outcomes or measures in addition to those prescribed by WIA and what process the State is using to track and report them?

The state does not use any performance outcomes or measures in addition to those prescribed by WIA.

4. Describe the State's common data system and reporting processes in place to track progress. Describe what data will be collected from the various One-Stop partners (beyond that required by DOL), use of quarterly wage records (including how your State accesses wage records), and how the Statewide system will have access to the information needed to continuously improve. (§112(b)(8)(B).)

The state has a common data system – the [State Hosted Management Information System](#). The system collects the common information used by the partners who currently subscribe to the system. Wait times are also tracked in addition to preliminary eligibility determination and some case management information. This system is used as the Workforce Investment Act Management Information System.

The [State Hosted Management Information System](#) tracks participants who receive intensive and/or training services funded by WIA Title IB. Services that are provided for these participants from any other entity besides WIA Title IB are tracked in [the MIS](#).

The [state MIS](#) allows a broad array of reports to be run on participation and exit of individuals in order to analyze data at the state, local area, regional, and staff levels. Exiters' social security numbers are matched quarterly against the state unemployment insurance wage files and the Wage Record Information System (WRIS). The state also matches social security numbers of exiters against the Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES). This has contributed to the continuous improvement of the outcomes in the employment measures, as more individuals are found in one or more of these databases through electronic matching processes.

The Governor and the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board are leading the efforts to ensure collaboration and continuous improvement in the statewide workforce investment system. Through its committee structure, the board will regularly assess the comprehensive state performance measures. Statewide and individual local area quarterly performance outcomes are shared with the local areas. The board will be able to monitor its own progress through the annual report to the Secretary and make any necessary recommendations to the Governor should action be required. Monitors will be available to the board for any of the oversight responsibilities including, but not limited to, evaluating and insuring compliance with state and federal program and policies.

Two other reporting requirements from the national office also help the state to track progress, measure continuous improvement and stay in compliance. The Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD) and Data Validation for reports and data elements are run annually and offer the opportunity to check and balance the data in the state MIS system, with results from software developed by national contractors. This information is shared with the local areas after analysis has been done on the results. This ensures that elements that have the largest incidence of error rates are examined at the local level. Processes and procedures are put in place that leads to a decrease in the error rates.

5. Describe any actions the Governor and State Board will take to ensure collaboration with key partners and continuous improvement of the statewide workforce investment system. (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(1).)

The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) has made a commitment to leading by example and becoming a role model to continuous improvement. They have established a continuous improvement strategy based on the seven criteria of the Malcolm Baldrige model for evaluating continuous improvement. One of the goals under this strategy is to establish an understanding between partners. As a first step, an ad hoc committee to the NWIB (with the support of the Governor) conducted an inventory of workforce development training programs in the State. The inventory found that seven state agencies or commissions in Nebraska provide nearly 60 workforce development programs. These state agencies include the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Nebraska Community College System, Nebraska Department of Corrections, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services,

and Nebraska Department of Labor. This information shall now be used as a tool to create a system that serves the workforce needs of Nebraska more efficiently and effectively. The continuous improvement strategy also includes a goal to have good communication between State and Local boards. The NWIB shall allow time for Local boards to share concerns with the State Board. The Local boards participated in establishing the Vision and Priorities for this State plan.

6. How do the State and local boards evaluate performance? What corrective actions (including sanctions and technical assistance) will the State take if performance falls short of expectations? How will the State and Local Boards use the review process to reinforce the strategic direction of the system? (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(1), and 112(b)(3).)

Each local area will collect their own participant data on personal computers using the same statewide software package and standard Management Information System forms. State staff track and review performance on a quarterly basis, for the state, as well as for each local area. This allows the performance measurement standards to be updated each quarter as actual data is received. The state and each local board are sent a quarterly report on their updated standards and actual performance. The state and local boards will be involved in a continuous evaluation of program performance. The Compliance Committee of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board will review performance on a regular basis, oversee the corrective actions and technical assistance process, and determine what, if any, directional changes are required for the state or local areas. The state and local boards' performance system is based, in part, on a commitment to enhance local performance through incentive, capacity building, and technical assistance monetary awards. The PY07 local performance was evaluated using the PY07 Plan's language and the PY08 local performance was evaluated using the PY09 Plan's language. Since Nebraska has been impacted by the deep economic downturn experienced by the entire nation, the PY09 and PY10 local performance will be evaluated as outlined below. These awards are intended to reinforce the strategic direction of the system.

Failure

Failure to meet performance standards occurs when a local area does not meet a cumulative average of 90% of the core performance level per program (adults, youth and dislocated worker). Local areas that fail to meet performance standards will not receive incentive awards for the particular program for that program year.

Technical Assistance

Local areas that fail to meet performance standards are eligible to receive technical assistance funds to aid them in correcting their performance. The amount of funds set aside for technical assistance will be identified at the same time the incentive funds are awarded. Before technical assistance funds are distributed, the local area must submit a corrective action plan that addresses:

- the analysis done to determine the causes for the failure, and
- the steps that need to be taken to correct the problems along with an estimated line item budget to accomplish the steps.

The State Department of Labor - Office of Employment and Training will assist the local area in identifying training opportunities that relate to areas where

correction is needed. After the corrective action plan has been approved and funds distributed, a monthly review of performance will be conducted at the state level. If improvement does not take place by the end of the following quarter, a meeting will be held with representation from the local area administrative unit, local workforce investment board and the state administrative office present.

Sanctions

The state will take corrective action towards any local area that fails to meet the levels of performance for the core indicators of performance for a program area (adults/youth/dislocated workers) two years in a row. The State sanction policy will require a reorganization plan within 180 days of the end of the second program year of any local area that fails to meet performance expectations in the same program area in two consecutive years.

Any local area that has a reorganization plan imposed by the state must implement that plan. In addition, the local area will not be eligible for any incentive funds.

The reorganization plan may require the appointment and certification of a new local Workforce Investment Board, prohibit the use of service providers or One-Stop partners that have been identified as achieving poor levels of performance, or make such other changes as the state determines to be necessary to improve performance.

The Governor shall notify the Secretary of Labor and the local Workforce Investment Board of the failure, the reorganization plan and the technical assistance that will be provided.

Local areas will have 30 days from receipt of the reorganization plan notice to appeal to the Secretary of Labor to rescind or revise the plan.

Provisions of the reorganization plan shall be implemented by the end of the program year in which the plan was issued.

INCENTIVE AWARDS

At a minimum, two and one half percent (2.5%) of the Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker funds set aside at the state level will be available for incentive awards, capacity building, and technical assistance. Nebraska will reserve 67% of this set-aside for incentive grants and 33% for capacity building and technical assistance.

To be considered eligible for receiving an incentive award, a local area must have a cumulative average of 90% of the core performance level per program area. When calculating an individual standard, performance is rounded to whole numbers with .5 and over rounded up, and .4 and below rounded down. If the actual performance rounded is equal to or higher than the adjusted standard, then the local area has met or exceeded the individual

standard. If after rounding, actual performance is below the adjusted standard, then the local area has not met that individual standard.

Of the funds available for incentive (the 67% share), the distribution of the funds will be the following:

Adults	33%
Dislocated Workers	33%
Youth	34%

When a local area has met the criteria to be eligible for incentives, the following factors will be used to evaluate performance and assign monetary awards.

Factor 1. [Made 90% or more](#) of the Secretary of Labor's performance standards;
Factor 2. Placement in quality employment that provides fringe benefits;
Factor 3. Placement in quality employment that exceeds the [entry level](#) wage at placement for the local area based on Labor Market Information data; and
Factor 4 Share of Exiters as identified in the Annual Report.

Distribution of funds for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth.

Adult

Thirty-three percent (33%) of the total funds available for incentive will be used to reward local areas that [made 90% or more](#) of the Secretary of Labor's core performance standards in the adult measures.

The weight distribution for [making 90% or more](#) of these performance measures is:

· Entry into Unsubsidized Employment	20%
· 6-Months retention in Unsubsidized Employment	20%
· Average Earnings	20%

Ten percent (10%) will be used as a reward for placing participants in quality employment. Half of this share will be divided among the local areas who are able to exceed the [Entry Level](#) Wage at Placement for their area based on the following Labor Market Information data:

Omaha	\$9.05
Lincoln	\$8.60
Greater Nebraska	\$7.95

The other half of the ten percent share will reward local areas that can verify that over half of those employed at termination will be eligible for fringe benefits with their employer. If no local area qualifies for this 10%, then the funds allowed for this factor will be incorporated with the funds for first factor.

Thirty percent (30%) will be given to local areas eligible for this program's incentive based on their share of Adult exiters according to the Annual Report.

Dislocated Workers

Thirty-three percent (33%) of the total funds available for incentive will be used to reward local areas that **made 90% or more of** the Secretary of Labor's core performance standards in the dislocated workers area.

The weight distribution for **making 90% or more of** these performance measures is:

· Entry into Unsubsidized Employment	20%
· 6-Months retention in Unsubsidized Employment	20%
· Average Earnings	20%

Ten percent (10%) will be used as a reward for placing participants in quality employment. Half of this share will be divided among the local areas who are able to exceed the **Entry Level** Wage at Placement for their area based on the following Labor Market Information data:

Omaha	\$9.05
Lincoln	\$8.60
Greater Nebraska	\$7.95

The other half of the ten percent share will reward local areas that can verify that over half of those employed at termination will be eligible for fringe benefits with their employer. If no local area qualifies for this 10%, then the funds allowed for this factor will be incorporated with the funds for first factor.

Thirty percent (30%) will be given to local areas eligible for this program's incentive based on their share of Dislocated Worker exiters according to the Annual Report.

Youth

Thirty-four percent (34%) of the total funds available for incentive will be used to reward local areas that **made 90% or more of** the Secretary of Labor's core performance standards for Youth.

The weight distribution **for making 90% or more of** these performance measures is:

· Placement in Employment or Education	20%
· Attainment of Degree or Certificate	20%
· Literacy and Numeracy Gains	20%

Ten percent (10%) will be used as a reward for placing participants in quality employment. Half of this share will be divided among the local areas who are able to exceed the **Entry Level** Wage at Placement for their area based on the following Labor Market Information data:

Omaha	\$9.05
Lincoln	\$8.60
Greater Nebraska	\$7.95

The other half of this ten percent share will reward local areas that can verify that over half of those employed at termination will be eligible for fringe benefits with their employer. If no local area qualifies for this 10%, then the funds allowed for this factor will be incorporated with the funds for factor 1.

Thirty percent (30%) will be given to local areas eligible for this program's incentive based on their share of Youth exiters according to the Annual Report.

- 7. What steps has the State taken to prepare for implementation of new reporting requirements against the common performance measures as described in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL), 15-03, December 10, 2003, Common Measures Policy. In addition, what is the State's plan for gathering baseline data and establishing performance targets for the common measures? Note: ETA will issue additional guidance on reporting requirements for common measures.**

The state took steps to implement the new reporting requirements as defined by the common measures. Programming changes to the [management information](#) system were made to collect information defined in Training and Employment Guidance Letter 15-03, and then updated to meet the requirements in TEGL 17-05.

The establishment of a single, streamlined reporting and recordkeeping system called the Workforce Investment Streamlined Performance Reporting (WISPR) system will also require additional programming, procedure and process changes to be made. Team members will be identified from the programs that are, at a minimum, instructed to submit a single consolidated record for each job seeker. Members will include representatives from the following programs:

- Employment Service Program
- Veterans Employment and Training Service Programs
- Workforce Investment Act Title IB Programs (including Rapid Response)
- National Emergency Grant
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Program

This team will set the direction and develop the process and procedures that will enable the state to submit the consolidated record reporting. This will facilitate the integration of service delivery and aid in the breakdown of barriers to cooperation among programs.

8. **Include a proposed level for each performance measure for each of the two program years covered by the Plan. While the plan is under review, the State will negotiate with the respective ETA Regional Administrator to set the appropriate levels for the next two years. States must identify the performance indicators required under section 136, and, for each indicator, the State must develop an objective and quantifiable performance goal for two program years. States are encouraged to address how the performance goals for local workforce investment areas and training provides will help them attain their statewide performance goals. (§§112(b)(3) and 136.)**

The proposed level for each performance measure shall be included in Attachment C once the negotiation process has been completed. Contributions of the local areas are essential to the state attaining their statewide performance goals.

E. **Administrative Provisions**

1. **Provide a description of the appeals process referred to in §116(a)(5)(m).**

A unit of general local government, including a combination of such units, that requests, but is not granted, designation of an area as a local area may submit an appeal to the state board by filing a written appeal in the office of the Commissioner of Labor within thirty days of the mailing of the notice that the appealing party was not granted designation as a local area. The appeal shall set forth all issues that are the basis for the appeal. The Commissioner of Labor shall conduct the appeal hearing on behalf of the state board. The hearing procedures shall be governed by the Administrative Procedure Act. The appealing party shall be notified of the decision of the state board within ninety days of the date the appeal is filed by having the decision mailed to the person designated for receipt of notices by the appealing party in its notice of appeal, certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the state board shall be final unless an appeal is filed with the United States Secretary of Labor within thirty days of the mailing of the decision of the state board to all interested parties. Appeals from the decision of the state board shall be made to the United States Secretary of Labor as required under §116(a)(5) of the Act. To date, there have been no appeals filed.

2. **Describe the steps taken by the State to ensure compliance with the non-discrimination requirements outlined in §188.**

The State has provided policy on “Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination.” It requires that every recipient must designate an Equal Opportunity Officer, except small recipients and service providers. The policy requires each recipient provide initial and continuing notice that it does not discriminate on any prohibited grounds. Specific wording for the notice is attached to the policy. Each application for financial assistance under Title I of WIA must include assurances as identified in the policy. During presentations to orient new participants, new employees, and/or the general public to its WIA Title I-financially assisted program, a recipient must include a discussion of rights under the

nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIA, including the right to file a complaint of discrimination with the recipient or Civil Rights Center Director. A hard copy of “Equal Opportunity is the Law” should be provided and signed by all participants and employees and retained on file. Recipients must take appropriate steps to ensure that they are providing universal access to their WIA Title I-financially assisted programs and activities. The policy addresses how and where complaints may be filed. The policy also addresses procedures and timeframes for responding to discrimination complaints. In addition, each recipient is required to collect and maintain records to determine whether the recipient has complied or is complying with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the WIA.

The Nebraska Department of Labor has submitted a Methods of Administration document that describes the actions Nebraska shall take to ensure that its WIA Title I-financially assisted programs, activities, and recipients are complying, and will continue to comply, with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements of WIA and its implementing regulations.

The Nebraska Department of Labor is the WIA Title I Grant Recipient Agency and Joyce Welsch, Office of Administrative Services, is the EO Officer for State issues related to the grant. She also serves as EO Officer for the Nebraska Department of Labor. Her contact address is: Attention: Joyce Welsch
Nebraska Department of Labor
550 S. 16th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509
Phone: (402) 471-4957

XI. Assurances

1. The State assures that it will establish, in accordance with section 184 of the Workforce Investment Act, fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through the allotments made under sections 127 and 132. (§112(b)(11).)
2. The State assures that it will comply with section 184(a)(6), which requires the Governor to, every two years, certify to the Secretary, that -
 - a. the State has implemented the uniform administrative requirements referred to in section 184(a)(3);
 - b. the State has annually monitored local areas to ensure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements as required under section 184(a)(4); and
 - c. the State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with section 184(a)(3) pursuant to section 184(a)(5). (§184(a)(6).)
3. The State assures that the adult and youth funds received under the Workforce Investment Act will be distributed equitably throughout the State, and that no local areas will suffer significant shifts in funding from year to year during the period covered by this Plan. (§112(b)(12)(B).)
4. The State assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in section 134 of WIA, and the activities authorized in chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38 US code. The State assures that it will comply with the veterans priority established in the Jobs for Veterans Act (38 USC 4215).)
5. The State assures that the Governor shall, once every two years, certify one local board for each local area in the State. (§117(c)(2).)
6. The State assures that it will comply with confidentiality requirements of §136(f)(3).
7. The State assures that no funds received under the Workforce Investment Act will be used to assist, promote, or deter union organizing. (§181(b)(7).)
8. The State assures that it will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188, including an assurance that a Methods of Administration has been developed and implemented (§188.)
9. The State assures that it will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188. (§185.).
10. The State assures that it will comply with the grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary (pursuant to the authority at section 189(c) of the Act) which are necessary to enter into grant agreements for the allocation and payment of funds under the Act. The procedures and agreements will be provided to the State by the ETA Office of Grants and Contract Management and will specify the required terms and conditions and assurances and certifications, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - General Administrative Requirements:
 - 29 CFR part 97 --Uniform Administrative Requirements for State and Local Governments (as amended by the Act)
 - 29 CFR part 96 (as amended by OMB Circular A-133) --Single Audit Act
 - OMB Circular A-87 --Cost Principles (as amended by the Act)
 - Assurances and Certifications:
 - SF 424 B --Assurances for Non-construction Programs
 - 29 CFR part 37 --Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and regulation) 29 CFR 37.20
 - CFR part 93 --Certification Regarding Lobbying (and regulation)

-29 CFR part 98 --Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension
Certifications (and regulation)

- Special Clauses/Provisions: Other special assurances or provisions as may be required under Federal law or policy, including specific appropriations legislation, the Workforce Investment Act, or subsequent Executive or Congressional mandates.
11. The State certifies that the Wagner-Peyser Act Plan, which is part of this document, has been certified by the State Employment Security Administrator.
 12. The State certifies that veterans' services provided with Wagner-Peyser Act funds will be in compliance with 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41 and 20 CFR part 1001.
 13. The State certifies that Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities will be provided by merit-based public employees in accordance with DOL regulations.
 14. The State assures that it will comply with the MSFW significant office requirements in accordance with 20 CFR part 653.
 15. The State certifies it has developed this Plan in consultation with local elected officials, local workforce boards, the business community, labor organizations and other partners.
 16. As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIA, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws:
 - Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I--financially assisted program or activity;
 - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color and national origin;
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
 - The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and
 - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs.The grant applicant also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.
 17. The State assures that funds will be spent in accordance with WIA and the Wagner-Peyser Act and their regulations, written DOL Guidance implementing these laws, and all other applicable Federal and State laws and regulations.
 18. In accordance with P.L. 109-234, the State assures that none of the funds appropriated in P.L.109-149 or prior Acts under the heading "ETA" that are available for expenditure on or after 6/15/06, shall be used by a recipient or subrecipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II, except as provided for under §101 of Public Law 109-149.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION DESIGNEES AND PLAN SIGNATURES

Nebraska Workforce Development,

Name of WIA Title I Grant Recipient Agency: Department of Labor

Address: 550 South 16th Street, P.O. Box 94600

Lincoln, NE 68509

Telephone Number: (402) 471-5919

Facsimile Number: (402) 471-2318

E-mail Address: catherine.lang@nebraska.gov

Name of State WIA Title I Administrative Agency (if different from the Grant Recipient):

same as above

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Facsimile Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Name of WIA Title I Signatory Official: Catherine D. Lang, Commissioner of Labor

Address: same as above

Telephone Number: _____

Facsimile Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Name of WIA Title I Liaison: Catherine D. Lang, Commissioner of Labor

Address: same as above

Telephone Number: _____

Facsimile Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Name of Wagner-Peyser Act Grant Recipient/State Employment Security Agency:

Nebraska Workforce Development, Department of Labor

Address: 550 South 16th Street, P.O. Box 94600

Lincoln, NE 68509

Telephone Number: (402) 471-5919

Facsimile Number: (402) 471-2318

E-mail Address: catherine.lang@nebraska.gov

Name and title of State Employment Security Administrator (Signatory Official):

Catherine D. Lang, Commissioner of Labor

Address: same as above

Telephone Number: _____

Facsimile Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

As the Governor, I certify that for the State/Commonwealth of Nebraska, the agencies and officials designated above have been duly designated to represent the State/Commonwealth in the capacities indicated for the Workforce Investment Act, Title I, and Wagner-Peyser Act grant programs. Subsequent changes in the designation of officials will be provided to the U.S. Department of Labor as such changes occur.

I further certify that we will operate our Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs in accordance with this Plan and the assurances herein.

Typed Name of Governor Dave Heineman

Signature of Governor _____ Date 9-23-08

ATTACHMENT A
Comments and How Incorporated Into Plan

<u>Comment</u>	<u>Action</u>
Need more information on Regionalized Industry Clusters Mentioned in Goal 1	Added Map and Language
Need clarification of why there are Bullets under Goal 1	Highlighted Economic Development And Study Sources
In Goal 3, clarify “at the 3/16/05”	Added Language clarifying NWIB’s Planning Session
In Goal 3, tell where other solutions will be incorporated into Plan	Added Language directing reader to Overarching State Strategies section
In Section II, Priority 4, does it include All Agencies/groups in the One Stop	Programs are listed on next page
“Summary is very thorough and support the goals and recommendations.”	No action necessary
Add role of NWIB Committees in Goal 3	Added Language
Barriers from the perspective of a Local WIB Chair	Attach letter to Plan sent to the Regional Office and present to Compliance Committee
Error re: Job Corps-they are Located in Lincoln One Stop	Added Language
Add that communication is also enhanced by State staff serving as designated One Stop Liaisons	Added Language
Greater Lincoln Performance Review Committee supports the recommendation of 100% transfer authority between Adult and Dislocated Worker Funding streams	Included in Waiver Request Language
Internet information is outdated	In checking, found the copyright date of the program was misunderstood as the date of the Information.

ATTACHMENT B

SUBJECT: Grievances or Complaints of a Non-Discriminatory Nature

REFERENCE: Section 181, 20 CFR: 667.270, 667.600, 667.610, 667.630

BACKGROUND: The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) mandates that each State and local area receiving an allotment under Title I establish and maintain a procedure for grievances or complaints alleging violations of the requirements of Title I. Such procedure shall include an opportunity for a hearing and be completed within 60 days after the filing of the grievance or complaint. [The grievance procedure requirements applicable to Job Corps are set forth at 20 CFR 670.990. Complaints of discrimination will be handled through a separate policy. All information and complaints involving criminal fraud, waste, abuse or other criminal activity shall be reported immediately to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General, Office of Investigations, Room S5514, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20210.]

POLICY: The following provides standardized procedures for the submission and processing of complaints that allege:

- Violations of WIA Act, regulations or agreements under the Act and other non-criminal complaints.
- Violations of the labor standards provisions at Section 181(b), i.e., violations involving activities that impact wages of employees, displacement, working conditions, and employment conditions.
- Violations of the relocation provisions in Section 181(d).

Each local area, State, and direct recipient must:

- Provide information about the content of the grievance and complaint procedures to participants and other interested parties affected by the local Workforce Investment System, including One-Stop partners and service providers.
- Make reasonable efforts to assure that the grievance and complaint procedures information is understood by affected participants and other individuals, including youth and those who are limited-English speaking individuals. Such efforts must comply with the language requirements of 29 CFR 37.35 regarding the provision of services and information in languages other than English.

- Respond to written complaints through written acknowledgement of receipt and explanation of status and next steps. If an oral complaint is received, an informal attempt at resolution can take place prior to the filing of a written complaint. If resolution does not result, the complaint must be put in writing. Complaints must be legible, signed by the complainant or the complainant's authorized representative, and dated. In the event the complainant is unable to provide a written statement, an alternative method of obtaining written documentation from the complainant shall be pursued, which may include assistance by agency staff or local service provider.

These procedures will be available to all WIA staff, applicants, participants, One-Stop partners, service providers, sub-recipients, contractors, labor unions, community based organizations or other interested parties seeking to do business with the Department of Labor. Dissemination will be made through the Internet, Department of Labor Intranet, State Policy Manual, grant awards, and upon request. These procedures provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

A. Who May File

A complaint may be filed by any individual or organization, including but not limited to:

- program participants
- contractors
- WIA staff
- Local Area staff
- One-Stop Partner staff
- applicants for program participation
- labor unions
- community based organizations.

The identity of the complainant or any other person who has furnished information or assisted in an investigation of a complaint will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible, consistent with a fair determination of the issues.

No person, organization or agency may retaliate against any individual that files a complaint or testifies during complaint proceedings. Any individual may file a complaint without fear of jeopardizing their position, opportunity for advancement, salary increase or denial of rights and benefits provided by the Act, regulations, or state and local laws.

B. Time Frames

Except for complaints alleging fraud or criminal activity, complaints shall be made within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the alleged occurrence.

This policy provides that complaints submitted under this procedure will be either resolved or a decision issued within sixty (60) days.

C. Submission Requirements for the Complaint

Local Area Procedures

Grievance procedures shall be established at the Local Area level for resolving any complaint alleging a violation of the Act, regulations or other agreements under the Act. The procedures will explain the process for dealing with grievances and complaints from participants and other interested parties affected by the local Workforce Investment System, including One-Stop partners and service providers.

The Local Area procedures must provide an opportunity for an informal resolution and a hearing. Any hearing that may be required shall be completed within sixty (60) days of the filing of the grievance or complaint. The Local Area procedures may include a requirement that the complainant pursue an informal resolution with a Local Area service provider if the complaint or grievance involves an action or decision of the service provider or one of its employees. If a mutually satisfactory resolution results from an informal process, the staff member should include documentation in the file stating the issues and the resolution. The matter would then be considered closed.

The Local Area process needs to allow an individual alleging a labor standards violation the opportunity to submit the grievance to binding arbitration, if a collective bargaining agreement covering the parties to the grievance so provides.

If not resolved at the local level, then there needs to be an opportunity for a local level appeal according to the procedures below and submitted to the State at:

Nebraska Department of Labor
Office of Employment and Training
550 South 16th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

D. State Appeal/Review Process

Appeal of a Local Area Grievance or Complaint

If the complainant does not receive a determination on a complaint filed at the local level within sixty (60) days of filing or if either party is dissatisfied with the local hearing decision, an appeal may be made to the State. The request for review shall be filed within ten (10) days of receipt of the adverse determination or, if no determination is made within sixty (60) days, then at any time prior to receipt of a determination from the local level. Staff will review and/or investigate, provide opportunity for a hearing, and the hearing officer will issue a decision within sixty (60) days of the appeal to the State. A complainant may withdraw his/her appeal at any time prior to the hearing. The decision is final unless appealed to the Secretary.

Statewide Workforce Investment System Grievance or Complaint Review Process

Grievances and complaints from participants and other interested parties affected by Statewide Workforce Investment programs may be submitted to the State at:

Nebraska Department of Labor
Office of Employment and Training
550 South 16th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

If it is determined that the complaint is directly related to the local Workforce Investment Act program, then the complaint/grievance will be remanded to the local area grievance process. Local level procedures shall be exhausted before the complaint may be addressed at the State level. The local area shall either resolve the complaint informally or have a hearing and issue a final local decision within sixty (60) days.

Elements to Include in the Complaint Requesting Appeal of Local Area Decision or State Review

Complaints must be legible, signed by the complainant or the complainant's authorized representative, and dated. The date of receipt of the written complaint by the appropriate authority [local area, State, or direct recipient], triggers the clock for counting days of action taken.

Complaints must pertain to a single subject, situation or set of facts.

The name, address and phone number must be clearly indicated. If

the complainant is represented by an attorney or other representative of the complainant's choice, the name, address and phone number of the representative must also appear in the complaint.

Complaints must state the name of the party or parties complained against and, if known to the complainant, the address and phone number of the party or parties complained against.

Complaints must contain a clear and concise statement of the facts including pertinent dates constituting the alleged violations.

Complaints must cite the provisions of WIA regulations, grants or other agreements under WIA believed to have been violated, if known.

Complaints must state the relief or remedial action(s) sought.

Copies of documents supporting or referred to in the complaint must be attached to the complaint.

E. Investigation and Initial Determination

The Office of Employment and Training will review and/or investigate the alleged incident and issue a written initial determination within ten (10) days.

The Initial Determination will include:

- Statement of Issues
- Initial Determination
- Reason for Determination
- Opportunity for Complainant to request a hearing if not satisfied with the determination.

F. Hearing

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Initial Determination, they may request a hearing before the Commissioner of Labor or an appointed representative. The request for hearing will be filed within seven (7) days of receipt of the Initial Determination. The hearing will be conducted in an informal manner and formal or technical rules of evidence will not apply.

If a hearing is requested, the Office of Employment and Training will:

- Arrange for a hearing in the complainants locale if possible.
- Insure the hearing is held within thirty (30) days of filing.
- Prepare a written notice of hearing and forward to all affected/interested parties.

The written notice of hearing will include:

- Identity of hearing officer, date, time, and place of hearing, how hearing will be conducted and issues to be decided.
- The opportunity to withdraw the request before the hearing. This request must be received in writing before the hearing date.
- The opportunity to bring witnesses and/or documentary evidence.
- The opportunity to be represented by an attorney or representative selected by the complainant.
- The opportunity to have records or documents relevant to the issues to be decided at the hearing produced by their custodian.
- The opportunity to question any witness or parties.
- The opportunity to amend the complaint prior to the hearing.

The decision of the hearing officer will be rendered, in writing, within ten (10) days from the date of hearing. The decision will include:

- A statement of issues presented at the hearing.
- Hearing Officer's decision.
- Reason for decision.
- Recommended remedies to be applied.

G. Appeal to the Secretary of Labor

The Secretary of Labor shall investigate an allegation of a violation of the requirements of Title I if:

1. A decision relating to a Statewide Workforce Investment program grievance or complaint has not been reached within sixty (60) days of receipt of the grievance or complaint or within sixty (60) days of receipt of the request for appeal of a local level grievance and either party appeals to the Secretary; or
2. A decision relating to such violation has been reached and the party to which such decision is adverse appeals such decision to the Secretary.

All appeals to the Secretary of Labor must be submitted by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the:

Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210
Attention: ASET

A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the opposing party and to:

Region V Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
230 S. Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Appeals made under (2) above must be filed within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the decision being appealed. Appeals made under (1) above must be filed within 120 days of the filing of the grievance with the State, or the filing of the appeal of a local grievance with the State. All appeals should contain the following information:

- The full name, telephone number (if any) and address of the person making the complaint.
- The full name and address of the respondent against whom the complaint is made.
- A clear and concise statement of the facts, including pertinent dates, constituting the alleged violation.
- The provisions of the Act, regulations or grant or other agreements under the Act believed to have been violated.
- A statement disclosing whether proceedings involving the subject of the request have been commenced or concluded before any Federal, State or local authority and if so, the date of such commencement or conclusion, the name and address of the authority and the style of the case.

The Secretary is required to make a final determination relating to an appeal no later than 120 days after receiving such appeal.

H. Remedies

Remedies that may be imposed through this grievance/complaint process for a violation of any requirement of Title I shall be limited to –

- Suspension or termination of payments under this title;
- Prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirement under this title;
- Where applicable, reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and reestablishment of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of employment; and
- Where appropriate, any other relief available under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

I. Other Remedies

Nothing prohibits a grievant or complainant from pursuing a remedy authorized under another Federal, State, or local law for a violation of Title I of the Workforce Investment Act.

J. Violations of the Labor Standards Provisions at Section 181(b)

Complaints Related to Conditions of Employment

Employees of the Local Areas and Sub-Contractors shall submit and resolve complaints through local employer procedures.

Each recipient of WIA funds which is an employer of WIA participants shall continue to operate or establish and maintain a grievance procedure relating to the terms and conditions of employment.

Employers, including private-for-profit employers of WIA participants, may operate their own grievance system or may utilize the grievance system established by the State or the Local Area. Employers shall inform WIA participants of the grievance procedure they are to follow when the participant begins employment.

A complainant may appeal/submit the complaint if any of the following conditions exist:

- The employing agency does not operate a complaint system.
- The employing agency operates a complaint system but the procedures are not followed.
- The complaint alleges a violation of Federal or State rules and regulations.

Appeal to the Secretary

As described in Section G above, when the grievance alleges violation of Section 181(b) and the grievance procedure rights have been exhausted or the 60-day time period has elapsed without a decision, either party to such procedure may submit the grievance to the Secretary of Labor. The Secretary shall investigate the allegations and make a determination as to whether a violation of Section 181(b) has occurred.

If a modification or reversal of the decision issued pursuant to the recipient's grievance procedure is warranted, or the 60-day time period has elapsed without a decision, the Secretary may modify or reverse the decision, or issue a decision if no decision has been issued, after an opportunity for a hearing.

If the Secretary determines that the decision issued pursuant to the grievance procedure is appropriate, the determination shall become the final decision of the Secretary.

Binding Arbitration

As an alternative to the above, a person alleging a violation of Section 181(b) may submit the grievance to a binding grievance procedure if a collective bargaining agreement covering the parties to the grievance so provides. However, binding arbitration decisions are not reviewable by the Secretary and the remedies available to the grievant are limited to those set forth in the Act.

K. Violations of the Relocation Provisions in Section 181(d) of the Act.

When the grievance alleges violation of the Relocation Provisions in Section 181(d) of the Act, the grievance may be submitted to the Secretary of Labor for investigation to determine whether the State or local area is in compliance with the Act.

If the Secretary determines that a violation of the relocation prohibitions has occurred, the Secretary shall require the State that has violated such provisions to repay to the United States an amount equal to the amount expended in violation.

L. Recordkeeping Requirements

Complaint records must be retained for a minimum of three years following resolution of the complaint. These records should be made available for review, as needed for compliance verification purposes.

ATTACHMENT C
TABLE FOR STATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND GOALS

WIA requirement at section 136(b)	Previous year Performance (PY08)		Perf Goals PY06	Perf Goals PY07	Perf Goals PY08	Perf Goals PY09	Perf Goals PY10
Adults:							
Entry into Unsubsidized Employment	85.8		86	86	83	83	83
6-Months Retention in Unsubsidized Employment	90.6		87	87	87.5	87.5	87.5
6-Mos Earnings received in Unsubsidized Employment/Average Earnings	\$10,464		9424	10036	10186	10186	10186
Attainment of Educational or Occupational Skills Credential	N/A		67	67	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dislocated Workers:							
Entry into Unsubsidized Employment	92.0		91	91	91.5	91.5	91.5
6-Months Retention in Unsubsidized Employment	97.6		93	93	93	93	93
6-Mos Earnings received in Unsubsidized Employment/Average Earnings	\$13,981		12930	13440	13574	13574	13574
Attainment of Educational or Occupational Skills Credential	N/A		76	76	N/A	N/A	N/A
Youth Aged 19-21:							
Entry into Unsubsidized Employment	N/A		80	80	N/A	N/A	N/A
6-Months Retention in Unsubsidized Employment	N/A		90	90	N/A	N/A	N/A
6-Months Earnings received in Unsubsidized Employment	N/A		4500	3600	N/A	N/A	N/A
Attainment of Educational or Occupational Skills Credential	N/A		59	62	N/A	N/A	N/A
Youth 14-18:							
Attainment of Basic, Work Readiness and/or Occupational Skills	N/A		83	83	N/A	N/A	N/A
Attainment of Secondary School Diplomas/Equivalents	N/A		77	77	N/A	N/A	N/A
Placement & Retention in Post-Secondary Education/Training, or Placement in Military, Employment, Apprenticeships	N/A		62	68	N/A	N/A	N/A
Participant Customer Satisfaction	N/A		83	84	N/A	N/A	N/A
Employer Customer Satisfaction	N/A		76	79	N/A	N/A	N/A
Youth 14-21:							
Placement in Employment or Education	78.5				76	76	76
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	71.2				73	73	73
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	49.8				38	38	38

Wagner-Peyser

Performance Measures	PY07	PY08	PY09	PY10
Entered Employment	69	69	69	69
Employment Retention	84	84	84	84
Average 6-Mos Earnings	\$10,500	\$10,700	\$10,700	\$10,700